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BUREAUCRATIC AUTONOMY:
INDEPENDENCE OF DONOR FUNDED BUREAUCRATS

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ABSTRACT

A scan through available political science and public administration literature points to a global upsurge in studies on bureaucratic autonomy. The predominant focus of most of these studies have been to either establish a framework for conceptualizing the theory of autonomy or to delve into the professionalism and autonomy of certain bureaucrats. This current study seeks to apply the Principal Agency Theory and the Bureaucrat Professionalism Theory to ascertain the independence of the ECOWAS donor funded bureaucrat. The study was qualitative in nature, adopted an exploratory research design and a purposive sampling approach. Structured interviews were administered to 10 respondents comprising 7 donor funded bureaucrat and 3 senior members of ECOWAS who were ‘purposively’ drawn for the study. The results of the study revealed that even though the autonomy of the ECOWAS donor funded bureaucrat is not absolute, they wield a certain level of autonomy that fits both into ‘autonomy of will’ and ‘autonomy of action’. In much the same way, the study established that the ECOWAS donor funded bureaucrat satisfies a significant portion of professionalism standards. Additionally, this study found that Communication flaws, Economic development disparities amongst member countries and Change management are the various impediments to the professionalism of the ECOWAS donor funded bureaucrat. The study, therefore, recommends that ECOWAS should review its 12 months chairmanship tenure which tends to introduce frequent modifications into the management of ECOWAS. Again, the study recommends the establishment of a robust research unit to remedy the situation where bureaucrats struggle to access relevant data to aid decision making. To add to this, ECOWAS should commence negotiations with the professional bodies of the various donor funded bureaucrats to ensure that they implement legislations permitting the application of sanctions to professionals whose conduct falls short of acceptable standards. Purposive sampling (non-probability sampling) was employed in selecting respondents, hence the sampling frame would not have equal chance of being selected. Therefore, the findings of this study cannot be generalized to wider population of donor funded bureaucrats globally. Future research should focus on other unions using different sampling methods. Furthermore, this study employed the Principal Agent Theory (main) and Bureaucratic Professionalism Theory (Supporting) in assessing the autonomy of the ECOWAS donor funded bureaucrats. Future research should also focus on

the application of other models to understand the level of autonomy of the ECOWAS donor funded bureaucrat.

DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to God and My Family especially My Son, Oheneba Afriyie Osei, My Wife, Barbara Obi Asante and My mum, Madam Esther Sarfo for their support and encouragement. God richly bless you all.

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

CEAO	<i>Communauté économique de l'Afrique de l'Ouest</i>
EBID	<i>ECOWAS Bank for Investment and Development</i>
ECA	<i>Economic Commission for Africa</i>
E-CET	<i>ECOWAS Common External tariff</i>
ECOWAS	<i>Economic Community of West Africa States</i>
ECREEE	<i>ECOWAS Centre for Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency</i>
EEC	<i>European Economic Community</i>
EPA	<i>Economic Partnership Agreement</i>
ERDF	<i>ECOWAS Regional Development Fund</i>
ERERA	<i>ECOWAS Regional Electricity Regulatory Authority</i>
EU	<i>European Union</i>
EYSDC	<i>ECOWAS Youth and Sports Development Centre</i>
INGO	<i>International Nongovernmental Organizations</i>
IO	<i>International Organization</i>
IPSAS	<i>International Public Sector Accounting Standard</i>
OAU	<i>Organization of African Unity</i>
PAT	<i>Principal-Agent Theory</i>
PPDU	<i>Project Preparation and Development Unit</i>
QA	<i>Quality Assurance</i>
SO	<i>Supranational Organization</i>
RAAF	<i>Regional Agency for Agriculture and Food</i>
UMOA	<i>Union Monétaire Ouest Africaine</i>
UN	<i>United Nations</i>
WAHO	<i>West African Health Organization</i>
WAMA	<i>West Africa Monetary Agency</i>
WAMI	<i>West African Monetary Institute</i>
WB	<i>World Bank</i>
WHO	<i>World Health Organization</i>

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.0 Background

Modern societies are confronted with numerous problems that transcend geographical borders. This occasioned the creation of international and supranational organizations to mitigate these challenges at the international and global level. To achieve this, “one necessary, although not sufficient, factor... is the establishment of common institutions, including a permanent administration, independent of national governments serving the common interest” (Trondal & Veggeland, 2014: 55). This is because, like modern governments, international bureaucracies formulate and implement policies expected to serve the interest of member states (not one member state) and whose consequences are borne by member states. Therefore, the composition of these bureaucracies (institutions) must be representative of the various states that constitute them. Not only should interest in its composition be on how reflective it is of the states that constitute them but also how its composition affects its effectiveness and autonomy. Following from the above-mentioned roles of international bureaucracies, it has become more relevant to understand the conditions occasioning the recruitment of these bureaucrats.

“Assuming that the demographic profile of government officials shape basic features of their decision-making behavior, it is important to understand how the demographic profile of government institutions comes about” (Murdoch et al., 2014: 72) and in the case of international bureaucracies, how these bureaucrats are recruited and their wage and incentive packages determined. Also, considering that the international system is driven by competitive self-interest (realist international relations perspective), coupled with the rising complexities of modern governance, states and international organizations have had to rely on other organizations for assistance in areas they fall short technically. This creates a particularly interesting staff category that works in, but not necessarily exclusively for, the international organization (e.g., Seconded National Experts in the European Commission, or bureaucrats funded by donor organizations in the Economic Community of West Africa States). As discussed in more detail below, this staff category will be central to my analysis.

My thesis takes the Economic Community of West Africa States (ECOWAS) as its central case (more information on this case is given in Chapter 2). A scan through the 2010 ECOWAS Revised

Treaty points to the ECOWAS Commission previously called the ECOWAS Secretariat as the administrative wing of the organization, headed by a president who is elected for a non-renewable period of four year term, assisted by a vice president, 13 commissioners (forwarded from member states) and bureaucrats working in the various departments and agencies (Department of Energy, Infrastructure, Regional Agency for Agriculture and Food, West Africa Monetary Agency, West African Health Organization etc.) of the ECOWAS Commission. The ECOWAS Commission established in 1975 had the responsibility to “eliminate tariffs and non-tariff barriers among member states over a 15 year period” to promote free movement of goods, services and people for purposes of economic harmonization and integration within the West Africa Sub-Region (Cluster, 1982). However, like any other human organization, the ECOWAS Commission is not without a challenge(s). Some of these challenges include member states commitment, threats posed by colonial ties, financial and human resource challenges. Cluster (1982) in his study titled “*ECOWAS: Problems and Prospects*” established that inadequate staffing has been an aged-old problem of ECOWAS since its establishment in 1975 and have had to rely on the services of externally funded (Donor-funded) bureaucrats. The critical need and reliance on donor funded bureaucrats by ECOWAS is evident in its 2012 annual report in which the Commission is seen reporting on the “need to fill eight (8) donor funded positions for the Project Preparation and Development Unit (PPDU) of the Department of Infrastructure” (ECOWAS, 2012: 83). Therefore, the human resource/staffing challenge of the ECOWAS Commission can be seen as one not of recent origin. To mitigate this shortfall, the Commission has had to rely on development partners for technical and financial assistance in the formulation and implementation of ECOWAS Commission’s policies and programs. For example, following the implementation of the Wave 1 of the ECOLinK Project as part of the ECOWAS Commission’s institutional reform initiated in 2015, the Commission had to rely on assistance from the European Union to “engage the services of Quality Assurance (QA) Consultants to review all the activities of Wave 1” (ECOWAS, 2016: 116). The Wave 1, initiated and operationalized in mid-2014 and 2015 respectively, focused on financial management, procurement and control within the ECOWAS Commission. Similarly, between 2014 and 2015, the World Bank assisted the ECOWAS Commission in securing the “services of an [International Public Sector Accounting Standard] expert who conducted a Gap Analysis... between ECOWAS existing accounting practices and IPSAS” (ECOWAS, 2016: 116). Following from the above, one cannot underestimate the role and influence of development partner

sponsored bureaucrats in the formulation and implementation of the ECOWAS Commission's policies and programs.

However, development partner sponsored bureaucrats remain unexplored in the literature on representative bureaucracy and bureaucratic autonomy. The aim of this study primarily, is to assess the extent to which donor/development partner-funded bureaucrats are independent of the donor (International Organizations and or individual countries) and the mechanisms put in place by ECOWAS Commission to ensure donor funded bureaucrats serve the ECOWAS interest. Following from the above, this study asks to what extent can these bureaucrats (from donor organizations/countries) act independently of control from the donor organizations and to what extent are international organizations able to develop shared norms, values, goals, and codes of conduct among its bureaucrats to the extent that they become loyal defenders of these values, norms etc. against control from donor organizations and countries interest?

1.1 Statement of Problem

Kühn (2014: 2), posits that bureaucratic effectiveness, to a large extent, is dependent on its ability to take “autonomous action, i.e. the capabilities to act in accordance with own aspirations and ambitions without being halted or vetoed by [appointing authority]”. If Trondal et.al (2010) cited in Kühn (2014: 2) argues that “central to the theories of bureaucratic autonomy is the assumption that autonomous action is fueled by independence on the actor-level within an organization”, then there is much to desire about how bureaucrats assert their independence/autonomy (an important component of bureaucrat professionalism norms) from donor sponsored organizations and countries whom they share identity with.

Not only do organizations make use of expert knowledge to legitimize themselves and their views within the environment they operate in, but sometimes organization's bedeviled with inadequate financial and limited human resources may have to depend on donor organization for these services. The recruitment of these bureaucrats (technical experts) typically occurs in two fronts; Donor organizations (International Organizations and or individual countries) pay for the services of this bureaucrats whiles the recipient organizations maintain the prerogative of who to employ and where the recruitment and payment of the wages and incentive packages of the bureaucrat(s) is determined and paid by the donor organization.

Studies on bureaucratic representation have focused on the representativeness of bureaucracies and the impact of this representativeness on policy outcome, that is the extent to which bureaucracies reflect the general socio-demographic character of a state/IOs (Jamil & Dangal 2009; Vibert, 2007), distinction between active and passive representation (Meier et al., 2019), permanent and internal staff of bureaucracies (Trondal, Murdoch, & Geys, 2015; Kennedy, 2014; Meier & Capers, 2013), bureaucratic autonomy (Kühn, 2014; Ege, 2105; Trondal & Veggeland, 2014) etc. While Trondal, Murdoch, & Geys (2015) did study the role of experts in international bureaucracies, their study was limited to how external experts to the European Union Commission reflects the socio demographic composition of the 27 EU member states. Similarly, even though Trondal, Murdoch and Geys (2015: 337) came close on the subject of externally funded bureaucrats and shifted the focus of study from “permanent full-time” bureaucrats towards temporary bureaucratic staff, their study did not delve into the representativeness and or independence/autonomy of donor funded bureaucrats. A scan through available literature on representative bureaucracy points to little or no study on the donor funded bureaucrats in international organizations.

To fill this gap, this study seeks to utilize the Principal-Agent Theory and Bureaucrat Professionalism Theory to map the autonomy/independence and the extent of professionalism of particularly donor funded bureaucrats from the parent organization and the mechanisms put in place by international organizations to ensure these bureaucrats serve the organization’s interest.

1.2 Research Objectives

1. To assess the degree of autonomy of the ECOWAS donor funded bureaucrat.
2. To analyze the extent to which ECOWAS Bureaucrats are professionals and exhibit professionalism.
3. To ascertain the impediments associated with exhibiting professionalism amongst ECOWAS donor funded bureaucrat.

1.3 Research Questions

1. What is the degree of autonomy of the ECOWAS donor funded bureaucrat?
2. What is the extent to which ECOWAS donor funded bureaucrats are professionals and exhibit professionalism?

3. What are the impediments associated with exhibiting professionalism amongst the ECOWAS donor funded bureaucrat?

1.4 Significance of the Master Thesis

The critical need for expert knowledge/bureaucrats and their increasing role in international organizations in the areas of policy initiation, formulation and implementation cannot be underestimated globally and particularly in Africa. Their mode of recruitment, the types of bureaucrats/bureaucracies and their autonomy in the past decades has received the needed attention from public administration research. However, little or nothing is known about donor funded bureaucrats. This study, therefore, is relevant for the following reasons.

1. The study will contribute to the literature on representative bureaucracy and bureaucratic autonomy.
2. The study will guide managers of international bureaucracies in understanding the orientation of donor funded bureaucrats in order to help them employ the needed organizational instruments to re-orient them (if needed).

1.5 Scope of the Master Thesis

This study is conducted among donor funded bureaucrats under the services of the various departments and agencies of the ECOWAS Commission. Donor funded bureaucrats may come either from international organizations (Intergovernmental Organizations or International Nongovernmental Organizations) or individual country (ies).

1.6 Organization of the Master Thesis

This study is divided into six chapters. **Chapter one** focuses on the background of the study, research problem, research purpose, objectives of the study, research questions, research significance, scope and limitations of the research and the chapter organization of the research.

Chapter two provides the contextual information of the master thesis. It begins with a brief description of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), the historical development of ECOWAS to the present day and concludes with a review of the organizational structure of the ECOWAS Commission.

Again, chapter three focuses on the theoretical framework and literature review of the study: Principal Agent Theory and the Bureaucrat Professionalism Theory; bureaucratic autonomy and bureaucrat professionalism.

Chapter four also deals with the methodological approaches, research strategy, the population of the study, sampling techniques, data collection instrument and method, data processing and analysis.

Chapter five of this master thesis focuses on the presentation of data, discussion and analysis of findings, the summary of the research, conclusion and recommendations from the study.

Chapter six deals with the summary of findings, recommendations and conclusions.

CHAPTER TWO

CONTEXT OF THE STUDY

2.0 Introduction

This chapter provides the contextual information of the study. It begins with a brief description of Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), the historical development of ECOWAS to present day ECOWAS Commission and concludes with a review of the organizational structure of the ECOWAS Commission.

2.1 Brief Description of West Africa

The Economic Community of West Africa States (ECOWAS) is an economic and political union of fifteen (15) states located on the West Coast of Africa. West Africa according to UN designation include 16 countries namely Benin, Burkina Faso, Cape Verde, The Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Ivory Coast, Liberia, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone and Togo and the United Kingdom Overseas Territory of Saint Helena, Ascension and Tristan da Cunha. Only Mauretania and the United Kingdom Overseas Territory are not part of ECOWAS. Whereas West Africa is currently home to 391,440,000 million people according to the United Nations World Population Prospects Report in 2019, the Economic Community of West African States which consist of 15 West African Countries and which altogether occupies an area of 5,114,162 km² is home to 385,333,699 people (Nations, Affairs, & Division, 2019 & "ECOWA, "2019). The country distribution of this statistics is summarized in the table 1.1 below, while Figure 1.1. provides a map of the ECOWAS territory.

Table 2.0 Distribution of ECOWAS by Member Country Population and Land Size.

Country	Land Size	Population	Official Language Spoken
Benin	114,763 km ²	10,323,000	French
Burkina Faso	274,200 km ²	17,322,792	French
Cabo Verde	4,033 km ²	544,081	Portuguese
Côte d'Ivoire	322,463 km ²	25,232,905	French
The Gambia	10,689 km ²	1,882,450	English

Ghana	238,535 km ²	29,592,868	English
Guinea	245,857 km ²	10,628,972	French
Guinea Bissau	36,125 km ²	1,647,000	Portuguese
Liberia	111,369 km ²	4,935,349	English
Mali	1 240 190 km ²	19,263,63	French
Niger	1,267,000 km ²	17,138,707	French
Nigeria	923,768 km ²	174,507,539	English
Senegal	196,712 km ²	13,567,338	French
Sierra Leone	71,740 km ²	7,092,113	English
Togo	56,785 km ²	7,491,000	French

ECOWAS Website (<http://www.sigtel.ecowas.int/ict-statistics/member-states-population/>).

2.2 Overview of the ECOWAS Commission

The primary objective of ECOWAS is to promote economic, social and cultural cooperation and integration among the member states. This is aimed at achieving a common economic and monetary union through the full integration of the economies of the Member States, leading to enhanced living standards, greater economic stability and prosperity. Currently, ECOWAS is a free trade zone and, on the strength of its trade liberalization scheme, is expected in due course to become a customs union.



Figure 1.1: ECOWAS Map (n.d). Retrieved from

https://www.ecowas.int/wp-content/uploads/2014/11/CEDEAO_ECOWAS_MAPS_en1.html

Regarding "regional and sub-regional economic integration and inter-African economic cooperation", Camara (2001: 41, cited in Asante (1997) argues that the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) collaborated with the Organization of African Unity (OAU) in promoting regional and sub-economic cooperation initiatives between African States in the mid-1960s. The Economic Commission for Africa's (ECA) proposed agenda for economic cooperation aimed at dividing the African Continent into regions for purposes of economic development with the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) as one of the proposed sub-regions. Even so, this integration and the formation of ECOWAS would not have been possible without the role of three significant players and events; "Nigeria's role as the first promoter of a Pan-West African integration scheme", the inevitable role of Francophone West African States in the establishment of a West African Economic Community and the role of France in discouraging Francophone West African States (French West Africa) from associating itself with neighboring Anglophone West African States/British West Africa (Camara, 2001: 42-43).

The significance of the role played by France in the integration of West African States to what is now the ECOWAS Commission cannot go unmentioned. Even though France played a very

significant role in the process of the integration of West African States, such a role has not always been a positive one (Gambari, 191: 33). During colonial rule, France established a parasitic and dependent relationship (natural resource dependence) between France and its colonies in West Africa. This is best explained by Rapley (1990: 16), cited in Camara (2001: 18) who states that "the entity of French West Africa, as a classical colonial economy, was essentially subordinated to France's needs. It was to supply primary goods and raw materials for the metropole and provide export market for French manufacturers". France, therefore, saw any emerging power within the West African Sub-Region as a threat to its own industrial growth. Considering such a relationship and its impact on the general integration of West African States, it was the view of Nigeria that only a total break of the existing relationship between France and Francophone West African States could pave the way for the larger integration of West African States. To undermine such efforts, and, to sustain this symbiotic relationship between France and Francophone West Africa, France assisted and encouraged Francophone West African States to establish their own form of economic integration to overcome the growing dominance of Nigeria in the region (Gambari, 1991).

However, between the period 1973-1974 (during the Arab oil boycott and the unstable political climate in the Middle-East), France had no option than to turn to Nigeria, an emerging and an important oil producing country in West Africa. Owing to this, "an unprecedented level of commercial relations between the two countries developed" to the extent that "by 1975 France was already getting close to 20 percent of its oil from Nigeria" (Camara 2001: 53 & Onwuka, 1989: 199). According to Onwuka (1989), while France trade with its closest and leading Francophone partners (Cote d'Ivoire and Senegal) in 1980 stood at \$1.251M and \$ 415M respectively, its trade value with its new partner (Nigeria) stood at \$1.483 billion (export to Nigeria) and an estimated value of \$2.718 billion (import from Nigeria). France, having established such a valued trade relationship with Nigeria already by 1975, proceeded to no longer regard Nigeria as a political rival in West Africa "but rather as a partner and a stabilizing force in West Africa" (Camara 2001: 54). For example, according to Nwokedi (1989), France in her effort to control the perceived Sub-Saharan ambitions of Libya had to rely on Nigeria. From its own end, Onwuka (1989) argues that Nigeria viewed their new and expanded trade relations with France as an opportunity to reach out to and establish a harmonious relationship with Francophone West African States. For example,

Nigeria and Côte d'Ivoire whose relationship was fractured during the "Biafra War" were able to overcome their differences at the beginning of a new and a harmonious relationship.

Following from the above mentioned developments- i.e. the weakened influence of France on Francophone West African States, due to some Francophone State request for a revision of the economic cooperation agreement with France, the emergence of Nigeria as a competitive sub-regional political rival and the Arab oil boycott causing France to depend on Nigeria for almost 20% of its oil by 1975 - France compromised on its stands and abandoned its opposition to the establishment of a Pan-West African Community led by Nigeria.

It is worth mentioning that even before the Economic Commission for Africa's (ECA) proposed agenda for economic cooperation in the mid-1960's, Nigeria had already suggested the establishment of an integrated West Africa in the early 1960's (Aly, 1994). This ambition was shot down by the "Biafra War" (1967-1970), and Nigeria's realization that two West African Countries supported the Biafran secession whereby France used its colonial relationship and power over Francophone West African States (particularly Côte d'Ivoire) for their negative role during the "Biafra War" (Gambari, 1991). Nigeria's experience from the "Biafra War" helped sharpen and refocus its interest on the need to establish closer ties and links with neighboring West African States. Behind the scenes, however, Nigeria also had a national self-interest agenda of using an integrated West African Region as a new and sustained market for its industrialization drive, as a opportunity for employment for its increased population as well as catapulting itself into position as the West African Regional Leader (Gambari, 1999). As a result, Nigeria's call for regional integration and unity among West African States did not receive a favorable response, particularly among Francophone West African States who feared they would be consumed and made subservient in any future sub-regional organization due to "Nigeria's large population and economic and political weight" (Emeka, 1990:26; Asante, 1986; Camara, 2001; Lavergne, 1991 & Gambari, 1991). To allay the fears of Francophone West African States and to demonstrate that its desire is not to be the dominant power for the proposed regional integration, Nigeria first established an economic cooperation agreement with Togo in 1974, the smallest among Francophone West African States. According to Camara (2001: 50), "the political purpose of the Nigerian-Togolese union was to demonstrate by effect that a small and relatively poor country could engage in an economically rewarding relationship with a large and rich country". This

Nigeria-Togo agreement had two main specific goals, and which is best summed up by Gambari (1991: 47) cited in Camara (2001: 50),

"The first goal of this union was more obvious: to reduce the fear of domination on the part of smaller and poorer countries that were still being approached to participate in a broader Pan-West African economic union. The second objective of this union was to demonstrate that official language differences did not constitute an insurmountable barrier to trade and economic relationships among West African countries".

To the advantage of Nigeria and its quest for the establishment of a sub-regional integration between West African States, a host of CEAO/UMOA Member Countries had by the mid-1970s began withdrawing from some of the agreements with France because they saw it as "neo-colonial, straight-jackets and infringement of their sovereignty" (Asante, 1986: 53). The Communauté économique de l'Afrique de l'Ouest (CEAO), created in 1973 was an organization established by France to strengthen cooperation between Francophone West African States (to counterbalance the dominance of English-speaking Nigeria and Ghana within West Africa), whereas UMOA was created in 1994 as a successor to CEAO to pursue the continued interest of all Francophone Union Monétaire Ouest Africaine.

According to Ojo (1987), during this same period, some Francophone West African States had also asked for a revision of the economic cooperation agreement between them and France and which was finally reviewed in the early 1970's. Notable among the CEAO/UMOA member countries that began withdrawing from such agreements were Niger, Benin and Mauritania. However, it is important to note that even though most of the CEAO/UMOA member countries withdrew from agreements with France and joined Nigeria in the establishment of what is now called the ECOWAS Commission, they still maintained vital relationships with France. This provided a counterbalance between Nigeria's growing influence in the sub-region on one hand and "France's enduring colonial hegemony" on the other hand (Camara, 2001: 51). These developments; successful implementation of Nigeria-Togo Economic Agreement, the growing wealth of Nigeria due to its oil boom which exacerbated the dwindling influence of France and withdrawal from some colonial agreements with France by some CEAO/UMOA Member Countries had an inevitable influence and impact on the formation of ECOWAS.

Another key element was the signing and adoption of the Lomé Convention in 1975, which marked the "the first trade agreement between European Countries and all their Former Colonies" (Camara, 2001: 55). This was also the first time that all former European Colonies - referred to as ACP States in the convention - joined forces together in negotiating with their colonial masters/powers as represented by the European Economic Community (EEC). The Lomé Convention "permitted almost completely duty-free access for most of the products from ACP countries" (Kerkelä, Niemi & Vaittinen, 2000: 2). Very significant to the Lomé Convention is the fact that it symbolizes the first time "French-speaking and English-speaking countries came together for a long negotiation process that culminated with the signature of the Lomé Treaty,... forged a sense of common destiny and realized the need to cooperate on common economic issues" (Camara, 2001: 55). It was at this point that the West African Leaders, party to the Lomé Treaty came to the realization that "if all countries in West Africa could come together to sign an agreement to promote trade with the EEC, it ought to be possible for them to conclude an agreement for the same ends within the sub-region" (Asante, 1986:54). Having agreed to a joint proposal by Nigeria and Ghana at a meeting of "lawyers and experts from fifteen West African Countries", held in Accra (Ghana) between 11-15 February 1973, the proposal was subsequently forwarded to and approved in Monrovia (Liberia) during a meeting of the ministers of states from the fifteen member countries on January 24, 1975 (Zagaris, 1978: 101). Following this, a treaty (The Treaty of Lagos) was signed on 28th May 1975 by fifteen Heads of State in West African countries (Benin, Burkina Faso, Cote d'Ivoire, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea Bissau, Liberia, Mali, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone and Togo) establishing the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS). Note, Cap Verde, joined ECOWAS a year after its formation in 1975. The Treaty of Lagos "represents a landmark in the history of African integration in that it establishes cohesive trade relations between French and English-speaking African countries among which trade and commercial intercourse have been virtually nonexistent" (Bruce Zagaris, 1978: 93).

2.3 Organizational Structure of The ECOWAS Commission

2.3.1 Introduction

The Revised Treaty of ECOWAS, signed in Cotonou, Benin on 24 July 1993, mandates the establishment of eight (8) institutions as well as any other institution deemed necessary, namely, the Authority of Heads of State and Government, the Council of Ministers, the Community

Parliament, the Economic and Social Council, the Community Court of Justice, the Executive Secretariat (now ECOWAS Commission), the Fund for Cooperation, Compensation and Development (transformed to ECOWAS Bank for Investment and Development in 1999) and Specialized Technical Commissions (ECOWAS, 1993). The organizational structure of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) is as follows:

2.3.2 Authority of Heads of State and Government

The Authority of Heads of State and Government of the Member States is the topmost or the supreme institution of the Economic Community of West African States. The composition of this institution comprises the Heads of State and/or Government of the Member States of ECOWAS. Generally, the mandate of the Authority of Heads of State and Government is clearly set out in Article 7 (2) of the ECOWAS Revised Treaty as "the Authority shall be responsible for the general direction and control of the Community and shall take all measures to ensure its progressive development and the realization of its objectives (ECOWAS, 1993: 8). In specific and practical terms, the institution of the Authority of Heads of State and Government of the Member States of ECOWAS is responsible for determining the policy direction of the Community, exercise oversight responsibility over all other institutions of ECOWAS, appoint the Executive Secretary of the Commission, appoint External Auditors on the recommendation of the Council of Ministers, "give directives, harmonize and co-ordinate the economic, scientific, technical, cultural and social policies of Member States" (ECOWAS, 1993: 8).

The Authority of Heads of State and Government of the Member States of ECOWAS is headed by a Chairman who is a current Head of State of one of the Member States of ECOWAS elected by and from among the current Heads of State of ECOWAS Member countries and who holds office for a period of one year (non-renewable term). Whilst the Authority meets ordinarily (ordinary session) once a year, an "extraordinary session may be convened by the Chairman of the Authority or at the request of a Member State provided that such a request is supported by a simple majority of the Member States" (ECOWAS, 1993: 9). The decision of the Authority of Heads of State and Government of the Member States of ECOWAS is binding on all Member States and Institutions of ECOWAS. For example,

While granting final approval for the EPA, the 45th Authority of Heads of State instructed the ECOWAS Commission to take every necessary measure to start the implementation of the Agreement. In execution of this decision, the ECOWAS Commission embarked on a number of priority activities to prepare the region for EPA implementation. The activities include the setting up of the EPA institutional mechanism, implementation of the EPA development component (EPA- DP), establishment of a regional EPA Fund and the Competitiveness Observatory and implementation of the EPA communication plan (ECOWAS, 2015: 50).

Even though the decisions of the Authority are binding on all Member States and Institutions of ECOWAS, the ECOWAS Court of Justice is immune from such powers and control under article 15 (3) of the ECOWAS Revised. This indeed states that the "Court of Justice shall carry out the functions assigned to it independently of the Member States and the institutions of the Community" (ECOWAS, 1993: 12).

2.3.3 The Council of Ministers

The Council of Ministers of ECOWAS is composed of all Ministers of States of ECOWAS Member Countries in charge of ECOWAS Affairs in their respective countries. The Minister in charge of ECOWAS Affairs from the very country of the current Authority of Heads of State and Government of the Member States of ECOWAS automatically heads the Council of Ministers.

According to the ECOWAS Revised Treaty, the Council of Ministers of State shall be "responsible for the functioning and development of the Community" (ECOWAS, 1993: 10). These responsibilities include, but are not limited to, making recommendations to the Authority of Heads of State and Government aimed at realizing the objectives ECOWAS, making all statutory appointments with the exception of the Executive Secretary, "prepare and adopt its rules of procedure", adoption and the approval of "Staff Regulations and the organizational structure of the institutions of the Community", "make recommendations to the Authority on the appointment of the External Auditors", draw up programs and budget of ECOWAS and other institutions of ECOWAS etc. (ECOWAS, 1993: 10-11).

To accomplish the above-mentioned responsibilities, the Council meets two times in an ordinary year, one of which takes place immediately after the ordinary session of the Authority of Heads of

State and Government of the Member States of ECOWAS. Like the Authority, the Council of Ministers may also convene an extraordinary session by the "Chairman of Council or at the request of a Member State provided that such request is supported by a simple majority of the Member States" (ECOWAS, 1993: 11).

Like the Authority, even though the decision of the Council is binding on all Institutions of ECOWAS, the ECOWAS Court of Justice is absorbed from such powers and control under article 15 (3) of the ECOWAS Revised Treaty of ECOWAS (see above).

2.3.4 The Executive Secretariat (Now ECOWAS Commission)

The ECOWAS Commission was established in 2007, but previously had been known for the years of its existence as the Executive Secretariat of ECOWAS. Mohammed Ibn Chambas from Ghana became the first President of the Commission from 1st January 2007 to 18 February 2010. Article 17, 18 and 19 of the Revised Treaty of ECOWAS details the establishment and composition of the office of ECOWAS Executive Secretariat. The Executive Secretariat was headed by an Executive Secretary who was the "Chief Executive Officer of the Community and all its institutions" (ECOWAS, 1993: 13). The Executive Secretary, who is assisted by Deputy Executive Secretaries and other staff deemed necessary for the effective and smooth running of ECOWAS, has the responsibility to "direct the-activities of the Executive Secretariat and shall, unless otherwise provided in a Protocol, be the legal representative of the Institutions of the Community in their totality", as well as ensuring that the decisions of the Authority of Heads of State and Governments of the Member States of ECOWAS were executed, "convening as and when necessary meetings of sectoral Ministers", preparing the "draft budgets and programmes of activity of the Community and supervision of their execution upon their approval by Council", preparation and submission of reports on all activities of the Community to the Authority of Heads of State and Government of ECOWAS, and "recruitment of staff of the Community and appointment to posts other than statutory appointees in accordance with the Staff Rules and Regulations" etc. (ECOWAS, 1993: 13-14). Functionally, the Commission is also charged with the responsibility to ensure that the Member states build the needed capacity to implement the community decisions.

However, the change of name from ECOWAS Secretariat to ECOWAS Commission was not just for name-change sake. It was believed that the change of setup will help ECOWAS to better adapt

to the international community and in its wake bring about equity, transparency as well as improve the greater functionality of the Commission in accordance with international best practice. Hence the decision of the Authority of Heads of State and Government to change the name from ECOWAS Secretariat to ECOWAS Commission in 2007.

The President and Vice President of the ECOWAS Commission are appointed by the Authority of Heads of State and Governments of the Member States of ECOWAS to serve for a period of four (4) years. The President in the discharge of his/her duties is assisted by 13 Commissioners. Each of these 13 Assistant Commissioners are assigned clear and specific duties within the various sectors of ECOWAS. The Commission makes recommendations and gives advice. However, such recommendations and advice are not binding on Member States.

Evidence from the ECOWAS 2016 annual report entitled “ECOWAS Common External tariff (CET) - Achievements, Challenges and Prospects” shows ECOWAS Commission as having a staff strength of 720 with 526 (73%) as males and 194 (27%) as females as at 25th October 2016 (ECOWAS, 2016). Of the total staff strength of 720, 361 representing 50.1% are contract staff. The Commission in its 2016 annual report is seen lamenting that “Community Institutions, sometimes with the assistance of Development Partners, resort to the hiring of contract staff to help in the implementation of regional integration activities and programmes as well as the Commission’s priority projects” (ECOWAS, 2016: 113). Considering the critical need for expert knowledge and the role of donor agencies (sometimes countries) in development agenda, it is startling that no empirical study has been conducted on the autonomy of donor funded bureaucrats. Particularly, it also evokes some theoretical perspective “because they [temporary bureaucrats] owe allegiance both to their home and host organizations” (Murdoch, Trondal and Geys, 2015: 337).

2.3.5 The Community Parliament

It was not until 1993 that the ECOWAS Parliament was established under the Revised Treaty of ECOWAS. This can be found under Article 6 and 13 of the ECOWAS Revised Treaty (ECOWAS, 1993). This is because the Treaty establishing ECOWAS in 1975 did not make provision for the establishment of a Community Parliament. The establishment of a Community Parliament (ECOWAS Parliament) was inspired by the "ECOWAS Vision 2020 which advocates for the

passage from an ECOWAS of States to an ECOWAS of People {which} requires greater involvement of the people in the decision-making process of the Community" (ECOWAS, 2017: 2).

Following this, "a Supplementary Act was signed by thirteen out of fifteen ECOWAS Member States to extend the powers of the Community Parliament and changed its name for ECOWAS Parliament" at the 50th Ordinary Session of the Authority of Heads of State and Government of the Member States of ECOWAS on 17th December 2016 in Abuja, Nigeria (Parliament, Data & Description, 2020). This Supplementary Act positions and grants the ECOWAS Parliament the power to be involved in the ECOWAS budget making processes, the power to be "involved in the enactment of all Community Acts relating to ECOWAS Economic and Monetary integration policies or the Treaty", grants it the power of oversight responsibilities over the operation of the Economic Community of West African States institutions, to be consulted on all Community issues with the exception of those expressly stated under Article ten (10) of the ECOWAS Supplementary Act of 2016 and to discuss matters in the Communities interest particularly on issues of "Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms and make recommendations to the institutions and organs of the Community. In this regard, it may constitute committees of enquiry and may mediate on the matter" ECOWAS (2017: 8).

The ECOWAS Parliament is made up of 115 representatives with each of the fifteen (15) Member State occupying not less than 5 seats and headed by a Speaker of Parliament. The remaining forty seats (40) are shared on the basis of a Member States population size. Below is a tabular representation of the number of seats allocated to Member States in ECOWAS Parliament.

Table 2.1 Allocation of Seats Among Member States in ECOWAS Parliament.

Country	Minimum Seat	Additional Seats Based on Population Size
Benin	5	-
Burkina Faso	5	1
Cabo Verde	5	-
Cote d'Ivoire	5	2
The Gambia	5	-

Ghana	5	8
Guinea	5	1
Guinea Bissau	5	-
Liberia	5	-
Mali	5	1
Niger	5	1
Nigeria	5	30
Senegal	5	1
Sierra Leone	5	-
Togo	5	-

Source: ECOWAS, 2017

To promote greater involvement of the people in the decision-making processes of the Community, Article 18 of the Supplementary Act of 2016, for the first time made provision for the election of the members of the ECOWAS Parliament. This is because, over the years, the Members of ECOWAS Parliament have been selected, forwarded and seconded by National Parliaments of the respective Member States to the ECOWAS Parliament to serve for a period of four years. The first direct election of the members of the ECOWAS Parliament is set to take place in 2020 since the current members of the ECOWAS Parliament have their tenure ending in 2020. These members of parliament shall be "elected by direct universal suffrage by the citizens of the ECOWAS Member States" (ECOWAS, 2017: 12).

2.3.6 The Economic and Social Council

The Economic and Social Council of ECOWAS established under article four (4) of the Revised Treaty of ECOWAS, and seeks to promote improved and higher standard of living of the citizens of the member states, social and health related problems, cultural and educational cooperation between Member States of ECOWAS as well as promoting and observing universal respect human rights and fundamental freedoms for all Member States citizens without distinction as to race, sex, language, or religion.

The Economic and Social Council of ECOWAS draws its mandate from Article 14 of the Revised Treaty of ECOWAS which states that "there is hereby established an Economic and Social Council which shall have an advisory role and whose composition shall include representatives of the various categories of economic and social activity (ECOWAS, 1993: 12).

2.3.7 The Community Court of Justice

The Community Court of Justice was created pursuant to the provisions of Articles 6 and 15 of the Revised Treaty of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS). The Court is composed of seven (7) independent judges who are selected and appointed by the ECOWAS Authority of Heads of State and Government from citizens of the Member Countries. These individuals must be persons who possess high moral character and must also be eligible or qualify to be appointed to the highest judicial office of their respective countries, "or are jurisconsults of recognized competence in international law" (ECOWAS, 1991).

The ECOWAS Protocol (PROTOCOL A/P.1/7/91) establishing the ECOWAS Court of Justice bars the appointment of two of the Community Judges from the same country. Article 4 (1) of the Protocol (PROTOCOL A/P.1/7/91) states that the members of the court shall be appointed for a period of five (5) years and subject to only one additional renewable term. However, to ensure continuity, "at the expiration of the term of a member of the Court, the said member shall remain in office until the appointment and assumption of office of his successor. Though replaced, he shall finish any cases which he may have begun"(ECOWAS, 1991: 3).

Judgements of the Court of Justice shall be binding on the Member States, the Institutions of the Community and on individuals and corporate bodies. The ECOWAS Court has the responsibility to ensure that all Member States and Institutions of ECOWAS adhere to the provisions of the Revised Treaty and all other protocols and subsidiary legal instruments enacted and adopted by ECOWAS. The Court has a mandate to deal with issues of liability for or against ECOWAS and its Institutions, violation of human rights within Member States of ECOWAS and makes declarations on bye-laws, decisions and subsidiary legal instruments adopted by the various institutions, departments and agencies of ECOWAS to ensure that they do not deviate from the Treaty establishing the Community as well as cases regarding the commitment of Member States to the Treaty of ECOWAS.

Based on the provision of Article 9 of the Supplementary Protocol of the Community Court - which mandates the Community Court to handle disputes between member states as well as disputes between the community institutions on the interpretation and application of the ECOWAS Treaty - the ECOWAS Court also acts as an Arbitration Tribunal for the ECOWAS until the Draft Arbitration Rules submitted to the Council of Ministers is approved. The Draft Arbitration Tribunal Bill is at the consideration stage before the ECOWAS Council of Minister.

2.3.8 ECOWAS Bank for Investment and Development

The ECOWAS Bank for Investment and Development (EBID) is an international financial institution established by the fifteen (15) Member States of ECOWAS under the Treaty of ECOWAS namely Benin, Burkina Faso, Cape Verde, Côte d'Ivoire, The Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Liberia, Mali, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone and Togo. EBID is the financial arm or backbone of the Community and was established in 1999 with its Headquarters' in Lome, in the Republic Togo.

The emergence and establishment of the ECOWAS Bank for Investment and Development (EBID) has its root in the 28th May 1975 Treaty that established the Economic Community of West African States. Article 50 of the ECOWAS 1975 Treaty made provision for the establishment of the ECOWAS Fund for Cooperation, Compensation and Development which was referred to as the "The Fund" (International Democracy Watch, n.d.).

However, the ECOWAS Fund for Cooperation, Compensation and Development in 1999 was transformed into the ECOWAS Bank for Investment and Development (EBID). The creation of the EBID was intended to assist and lead the creation of conditions that are favorable for the emergence and development of a West Africa that is economically strong, industrialized and prosperous as well as a West Africa, fully integrated into the global economic system and taking advantage of the positives inherent in globalization. Functionally, EBID started its operation on 1st January 2004 as a holding company and had two subsidiaries that specialize in two areas. These were the ECOWAS Regional Development Fund (ERDF) which focused on public sector financing and the ECOWAS Regional Investment Bank (ERIB) which focused on private sector financing in the Community.

On 16th June 2006, the Authority of Heads of State and Government of ECOWAS in their decision (Decision A/DEC.3/06/06) agreed to restructure and reorganize the ECOWAS Bank for Investment and Development (EBID) into a single entity with two windows with one window focusing on promoting the private sector and with the other window focusing on promoting developing in the public sector. The EBID has been functioning under this current structure (single entity with two windows) since January 2007. The prime objective of the ECOWAS Bank for Investment and Development (EBID) is to contribute to the economic growth and development of West Africa through the financing of both public and private projects in the areas of transport, energy, telecommunications, industry, services, poverty reduction, the environment and natural resources. The EBID is headquartered in Lome, Togo.

2.3.9 Specialized Agencies of ECOWAS

Beyond the institutions discussed so far, ECOWAS has also set up a number of specialized agencies. These will not be described in detail here, but for the sake of completeness will nonetheless be listed. West African Monetary Agency (WAMA), Regional Agency for Agriculture and Food (RAAF), The ECOWAS Regional Electricity Regulatory Authority (ERERA), ECOWAS Centre for Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency (ECREEE), The West African Power Pool (WAPP), ECOWAS Brown Card, ECOWAS Gender Development Centre, ECOWAS Youth and Sports Development Centre (ECOWAS/YSDC), West African Monetary Institute (WAMI) and ECOWAS infrastructure Projects Preparation and Development Unit (PPDU).

CHAPTER THREE

LITERATURE REVIEW AND CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

3.0 Introduction

This chapter reviews literature that are relevant to the central theme of the study. The chapter begins with a review of literature on Key concepts of bureaucrat autonomy. The final part of this chapter is devoted to a discussion of the conceptual framework employed for this study.

3.1 Discussion of Key Concepts

3.1.1 Autonomy/Independence

The question of what autonomy means and the phenomenon it stands for has been debated among public administration and political science scholars for decades (from the times of Wilson and Weber). The concept autonomy's "original meaning was political until the turn of the 19th Century: a right assumed by states to administer their own affairs" (Darwall, 2006: 263). It was around this same period that there was "a rise of political science interest in delegation of authority to administrative agencies and the issue of bureaucratic autonomy" (Yesilkagit, 2004: 528). In spite of this, there appears to be no consensus among public administration and political science scholars over the scope of what autonomy is. As rightly captured in the words of Olsen (2010: 151), "neither is there agreement about the process through which, and the conditions under which, autonomy is gained, maintained, or lost, nor according to which normative and organizational principles 'autonomous' entities should be governed and which decisions should be made".

Several scholars have attempted to build on the work of Max Weber (1924). This is because in principle, Max Weber's concept of bureaucracy is in no doubt applicable to that of transnational/international bureaucracies. According to Weber's bureaucratic model, "bureaucracies possess internal capacities to shape staff through mechanisms such as socialization (behavioral internalization through established bureaucratic cultures), discipline (behavioral adaptation through incentive systems), and control (behavioral adaptation through hierarchical control and supervision)" (Trondal, & Veggeland, 2014: 57). These mechanisms primarily, ensures bureaucracies/bureaucrats are able to carry out their duties independent from external pressures and control while at the same time operating within established boundaries by the legal authority

and (political) leadership of which they serve. This is because when bureaucrats are not autonomous, they are unable to take action independent or different from the preferences of the political actors. This, therefore, means that “to possess the capacity for autonomous actions, bureaucracies must have a high degree of insulation from other actors in the political system like elected politicians, organized interests, and societal groups” (Ellinas and Suleiman, 2012: 6). Maggetti, (2007) posits that autonomy means, above all, to be able to translate one’s own preferences into authoritative actions, without external constraints. Bureaucratic autonomy, therefore, refers to the capacity of a bureaucracy to “take sustained patterns of action consistent with [its] own wishes, patterns that will not be checked or reversed by elected authorities, organized interests, or courts” (Carpenter 2001: 14). Similarly, Ellinas and Suleiman (2012: 6) also argues that a bureaucracy is said to be autonomous when it has “the capacity to influence policy independently of the preferences of its political masters and in accordance with its own wishes, especially when political and bureaucratic preferences diverge”. More so, bureaucratic autonomy as argued by Bach (2016: 2) refers to a bureaucracy’s “ability to determine their own preferences and to translate those preferences into authoritative actions”.

On how bureaucracies develop and gain autonomy, Downs (1967) in his study Inside bureaucracy outlined four possible ways bureaucracies develop and gain autonomy. These are routinization of charisma (one component of Weber’s Ideal type of Bureaucracy) which arises when a group of people devote themselves to serving the course of a charismatic leader. The organization that is formed out of this devotion thus serve to prosecute and perpetuate the leader’s idea/vision; Secondly, bureaucratic agencies created on the basis of perceived social need. In this case, the affected parties push and pressure for the creation of an organization or agencies that serves to address their problems. However, merely pressuring for the creation and the need to solve a perceived social problem does not necessarily lead to the creation of and autonomy of bureaucratic agencies but that these agencies must meet the acceptance of “its (political) supporters as well as the beneficiaries of its program” (Yesilkagit, 2004: 532); Thirdly, an agency or bureaucracy splitting off from the parent body because it has grown in size and function. This may happen when an agency’s outreach expands due to crises/emergency or the passage of a new law that caused or causes an agency to operate on a broader scale and fourthly, a bureaucracy created as a result of entrepreneurship. This happens “if a group of men

promoting a particular policy ...gains enough support to establish and operate a large non-market organization devoted to that policy” (Downs, 1967: 5).

Mayntz (1978) in her seminal work *Soziologie der öffentlichen Verwaltung* argued that even though, ideally, bureaucrats are supposed to be politically neutral in addition to being loyal to the political master at the same time, these may place limit on autonomous administrative behavior. Mayntz (1978) also attempted to establish the relationship between the size of a bureaucracy and cohesion and how it impacts on bureaucratic autonomy. On this, she opined that while an increase in the size of a bureaucracy may, on one hand, lead to an increase in the bureaucracy’s political weight, it on the other hand, “deprive the administration/{bureaucracy} of its inner coherence and ability to engage in collective action” (Bauer, Knill, and Eckhard, 2017: 17). Mayntz considers a centrally organized bureaucracy with a small group of administrative leaders a particularly powerful and autonomous form of organization.

However, some differences exist between national and international bureaucracies and this difference can be found in the following areas: the external environment of international organisations, the organisational context within which the administrations of international organisations are embedded and the characteristics of IOs. For this reason, Weiss (1975: 54) admonished scholars “not to lump together national and international bureaucratic analysis but take into account the distinct characteristics ‘peculiar to international administrative structures’”. It is also believed that most bureaucracies of international organizations tend to derive their policy executing power/authority from “collective principals”. This appears to be “overwhelmingly the most common type of principals that we observe when analyzing international organizations” (Lyne, Nielson, and Tierney, 2006: 44). However, in some situations, they could be accountable to multiple principals and as argued by Ellinas and Suleiman (2012: 14), such structure “tends to enhance the autonomy of the bureaucracy—especially when the principals have conflicting preferences”. Therefore, how the political authority of international organization is structured and the degree of fragmentation “can give international bureaucracies more room for maneuver than their overseers had originally planned to allow” (Ellinas and Suleiman, 2012: 14).

IOs, like most political organizations, are characterized by hierarchy, division of labor between units, specialization, merit-based recruitment, and other characteristics that undoubtedly justify classifying international secretariats as bureaucracies (Bauer, Knill, and Eckhard, 2017: 18). This points to the fact that international bureaucracies do not just spring up into existence and operate

in a vacuum as well but that they are creations of statutes by the political actors. Moreover, it is also believed that bureaucrats “are supposed to make impersonal decisions relying solely on formerly prescribed rules and standard operating procedures, which are non-arbitrary and independent of competing (party) political interests” (Bauer & Ege, 2016: 15). But bureaucracies seeking and having to act autonomously and independent of the preferences of the political actors may sometimes be viewed as going beyond their set institutional mandate as well as challenging the political actors. This in most cases creates the need for control by the political actors. As argued by Ellinas and Suleiman (2012: 7) “in the same way that bureaucrats are trying to maintain their autonomy, their political overseers are struggling to exercise effective oversight over their bureaucratic agents”.

3.1.2 Autonomy of ‘Will’

Bauer & Ege (2016: 4) describe two types of autonomy namely: “Autonomy of will” and “Autonomy of action”. They argue bureaucratic autonomy of international secretariats can be conceived as the “combination of the ...capacity to develop independent preferences (‘autonomy of will’) and the ...ability to translate these preferences into action (‘autonomy of action’)”.

‘Autonomy of will’ hinges on a bureaucracy’s ability to act as a single unit with a united purpose in their dealings with the political actor’s (principals). This unity of purpose, will, in the words of Caughey, Cohon, and Chatfield (2009: 3) enable the bureaucracy fashion out “a single set of corporate goals” as well as internal procedures as a guiding principle to its members. To achieve this unity of purpose, organizational culture which represents the character of the organization must be developed. This is because this organizational culture “strengthens the cohesion, coordination and commitment among agency personnel” towards the achievement of the agency goals as well as providing “agency personnel with a sense of belonging to a community with a shared goal and mission” (Yesilkagit, 2004: 532-533). The absence of this cohesion is likely to lead to a situation where there are “pockets of autonomy within the lower echelons of the bureaucracy at the unit or departmental level” (Bauer & Ege, 2016: 4).

To develop autonomy of will, bureaucracies must have the capacity to develop their own preferences and these must differ from those of the political actors (principals). That is, there should be a clear separation between administration and politics with the bureaucracy having the capacity to setting its own goals, independent of the political principal. This is what Bauer & Ege

(2016: 4) refers to as “administrative differentiation”. However, bureaucracies having the capacity to develop their own preferences may not be enough to grant them autonomy because without the needed professional competence or expertise and financial capacity at their disposal in addition to the power/independence of discretion in determining their own preference, their preferences may become policies “only because elected officials find it in their long-term interest” (Carpenter, 2001: 106).

However, a bureaucracy’s ability to develop its own preferences is to some extent limited because “no bureaucracy survives unless it is continually able to demonstrate that its services are worthwhile to some group {political actors} with influence over sufficient resources to keep it alive” (Downs 1967: 7). Therefore, ‘autonomy of will’ as envisioned in the concept of autonomy by Carpenter (2001: 15) does not mean bureaucracies can do whatever they like without considering the interest of the political actors or the public interest but rather, manifests when bureaucracies “can change the agendas and preferences of politicians and the organized public”.

3.1.3 Autonomy of ‘Action’

Unlike the Weberian model that assumes that bureaucrats are “essentially rule-bound implementers of decisions made by political authorities; [who] may have technical capacity but ...don't have the authority to set agendas independently”, ‘autonomy of action’ on the other hand refers to “the ability of [a bureaucracy] to translate its preferences into action (Fukuyama, 2013: 12, & Bauer & Ege, 2016: 4). However, bureaucracies translating these preferences into actions is dependent on the level of capacities that a bureaucracy has. These capacities include but not limited to the professional/expertise at the disposal of the bureaucracy, financial capacity, etc. This is because political actors dealing with a bureaucracy or agency full of professionals and with the needed expertise “would not just feel safer granting them considerable autonomy [and discretion] but would actually want to reduce rule-boundedness in hopes of encouraging innovative behavior” (Fukuyama, 2013: 13).

However, regardless of the level of ‘autonomy of action’ that a bureaucracy enjoys, it does not mean that “bureaucrats should be isolated from their societies or make decisions at odds with citizen demands” (Fukuyama, 2013: 10). In the context of international bureaucracies and the principal agent relationship, autonomy of action does not necessarily mean bureaucracies should at all times act at variance to the preferences of the political actors but that there should be some

level of collaborations and accommodation of the preferences of the political actors. This is because regardless of the form of the regime (democratic or authoritarian), bureaucracies by themselves do not have the power to define their own mandates. As argued by Fukuyama (2013: 11), “an appropriately autonomous bureaucracy should be able to make judgment calls as to when and where to engage in such collaborations” and accommodation. However, it’s important to note that this accommodation is different from “a non-autonomous or subordinated bureaucracy ...micromanaged by the principal, which establishes detailed rules that the agent must follow” (Fukuyama, 2013: 10).

3.2 Measurement and Indicators of Autonomy of ‘Will’

3.2.1 Administrative Cohesion

Cohesion is commonly referred to as the “closeness or commonness of attitude, behavior, and performance within a work group” (Odom, Boxx, & Dunn, 1990: 158). To measure the level of administrative cohesion among the ECOWAS donor funded bureaucrats, this study employs two of Bauer & Ege (2016) indicators of administrative cohesion. First is the presence of staff transfers policies within IGO’s bureaucracies. That is the time span within which bureaucrats are transferred from one unit of the organization to the other. Even though in its 2012 annual report, the International Civil Service Commission of the United Nations argued internal and mandatory staff transfer remains an important management tool that enhances effectiveness, knowledge transfer and performance of staff (United Nations, 2012), this study is of the view that and as argued by McGregor Jr. (1974) and Bauer & Ege (2016: 6) “[l]ow mobility ...provides time for the process of interaction [among bureaucrats] to manifest itself in a bureaucratic culture of binding norms and values ...facilitating the emergence of internal cohesion”. This is because the longer bureaucrats/staff work together and interact among themselves, they are more likely to develop greater administrative cohesion. As argued by Bauer & Ege (2016: 6) “frequent interaction among the same staff members is a precondition for them to act as one (cohesive) entity”.

Second is the geographical distribution of the bureaucracy of inter-governmental organizations. That is the extent or proportion at which bureaucrats are centralized at the head offices of IGO’s as compared to the extent to which bureaucrats are spread across different units/departments within same or different member states. Considering the dispersed and decentralized nature of the

ECOWAS donor funded bureaucrats across different units/projects offices in Nigeria with some offices located in various member states and using two of Bauer & Ege (2016) indicators of administrative cohesion as a yardstick, one is tempted to argue, on the face value that cohesion among the ECOWAS donor funded bureaucrats is somewhat weak. This is because “geographically dispersed administrations are less cohesive, given that increasing dispersion makes it more difficult for the secretariat to act as one collective entity” (Bauer & Ege, 2016: 5). But with improved technology, these bureaucrats are within arms-length to each other, observing the same organizational culture in their day to day operations. Considering the aforementioned presence and use of modern technology in the work of the ECOWAS Donor/Development Partner-Funded Bureaucrats, there is strong cohesion among the ECOWAS donor funded bureaucrats.

3.2.2 Administrative Differentiation

Administrative differentiation deals with the extent to which the administrative leadership of a bureaucracy is independent from the political actors. This is very consistent with Carpenter’s understanding of bureaucratic autonomy which he argues represents a situation in which “a politically differentiated agency takes self-consistent action that neither politicians nor organized interests prefer but that they neither cannot or will not overturn or constraint in the future” (Carpenter , 2001: 17). Similarly, it is also consistent with Christensen’s (1999: 9) definition of bureaucratic autonomy which he defines as “the formal exemption of an agency head from full political supervision by the departmental minister”. Because autonomous administrations are seen as detrimental to the power of the political actor, political actors are more cautious and creative in designing public bureaucracies and the extent of powers they give them. To attain independence or autonomous administrative leadership, there is the need for the “existence of a governing board that appoints and oversees the agency head, interrupting the direct chain of command from the minister to the head of the organization” (Bach, 2016: 5). However, according to Hanretty & Koop (2012), merely having a governing board is not enough. They argue that the terms of reference of the governing board remains critical in insulating from or exposing the administrative leadership of the organization to political actors. To overcome this, and achieve administrative autonomy, there must be a legal regime (legal autonomy) clearly defining and backing the powers of the administrative leadership in taking autonomous actions and preferences. The legal regime or law must “authorizes the agency to decide individual cases in its own capacity ...these cases cannot be

brought before the minister, and the minister cannot intervene in case processing, neither through general nor specific instructions”. This refers to the,

The authorization by law of the agency head to make decisions in his own capacity, thus forbidding ministerial intervention in his decisions as well as his consultation with the minister or the minister’s advisers on decisions that, according to the law, are delegated to him Christensen (1999: 9).

Administrative differentiation also hinges on the capacity of the bureaucracy to scout for their own information and process them independent of the political actors. Here, the focus is on how the ECOWAS Donor/Development Partner-Funded bureaucrat is able to access, “collect, and process independent information” in the discharge of his/her duty. Even though the bureaucrat professional’s expertise and networking may serve as a buffer, the existence of a well-resourced and usable research unit within the bureaucracy and which he/she can take advantage of remains very key in developing autonomous preference from that of the political actors (principals). The capacity to scout for and process their own information to a large extent also depends on the financial resources at his/her disposal and the extent to which the organizational environment allows for easy access to information needed to make informed decisions. This is because even though the contractual agreement underlying the employment of the ECOWAS Donor/Development Partner-Funded bureaucrat may spell out the resources needed for the discharge of his duty, but because no “no bureaucracy survives unless it is continually able to demonstrate that its services are worthwhile to some group [political actors] with influence over sufficient resources to keep it alive”, dissatisfied and threatened political actors, may in some occasions act to impede the bureaucrats’ ability to “collect and process independent information” (Downs, 1967: 7 and Bauer & Ege, 2016: 6). At the institutional level, “independent research capacities are an important means for an administration’s ability to develop (and defend) policy options that are different from those of the political actors of the IGO” (Bauer & Ege, 2016: 6; Barnett and Finnemore 2004 & Haas 1990).

3.3 Measurement and Indicators of Autonomy of ‘Action’

3.3.1 Administrative Resources and Statutory Power

Human and financial resources remain crucial in determining the autonomy/independence or otherwise of international administrations. This has to do with the extent/degree to which

bureaucracies are able to make decisions concerning its human and financial resources (Verhoest, Peters, Bouckaert, and Verschuere, 2004a, & Bauer & Ege, 2016). To assert ‘autonomy of action’, international bureaucracies’ should be able to determine which staff and with the needed skill requirement is needed to fill a particular position other than being imposed on them by the political actors. However, asserting this ‘will’ cannot be done outside the scope and requirement that requires the composition of international bureaucracies to reflect the general characteristics of the member states (geographical representation).

However, it is also important to mention that the ‘how’ ‘who’ and ‘when’ of the financial resources at the disposal of international bureaucracies to a large extent exert influence on the above-mentioned autonomies (‘autonomy of will’ and ‘autonomy of action’). Is the bureaucracy self-financing like the IMF, World Bank etc. or it is “dependent on mandatory contributions ...or dependent on voluntary contributions with the donors earmarking a substantial portion of the budget for specific purposes, as is the case for the UN and the WHO?” (Bauer & Ege, 2016: 7). A bureaucracy is, therefore, more likely to have its autonomy of ‘will’ and ‘action’ compromised if its sources of finance is dependent on voluntary contributions by its members/member states (political actors). This is because bureaucracies will not stand the test of time unless it is able to prove its importance to its political actors who most often have control over the very financial resources needed by bureaucracies to survive.

In the case of the ECOWAS Donor/Development Partner-funded Bureaucrat, they appear fairly autonomous even though there is some degree of influence on them by their appointing authority (ECOWAS Development Partners/Political Actors) because they hold the power to recall their services at any time. This is mostly the case when these donor/development partners provide the support in the form of technical experts (direct human resource assistance). However, in the case of Donor/Development Partner-funded Bureaucrat’s whom financial resources have been provided but ECOWAS reserves the right of ‘whom’ and ‘where’ to employ from, one can safely argue that such bureaucrats enjoy a considerable level of autonomy.

Statutory powers on its part “concerns the authority that member states have delegated to an organization” (Bauer & Ege, 2016: 6). Here, the focus is on the extent to which the bureaucracy’s head is able to influence and set agenda and the extent of sanctioning powers the bureaucracy possesses. Bauer & Ege (2016: 7) opines that “if the [bureaucratic head] alone is responsible for

the preparation of the agenda (and proposals cannot be removed prior to the actual legislative meeting), the administration is particularly autonomous”. On the other hand, if the “executive board (or its functional equivalent) is in charge, the administration is less able to realize its preferences” (Bauer & Ege, 2016: 7). In the case of the ECOWAS Donor/Development Partner-Funded Bureaucrat, this has to do with the statutory powers enshrined in the contractual agreement between the principal (political actors) and the Donor/Development Partner-funded Bureaucrat.

3.4 Professionalism

Carr-Saunders and Wilson (1993: 284-5) argued that professionalism arises from “the existence of specialized intellectual techniques, acquired as the result of prolonged training”. Professionals who, having attained their training and skill and having gained acceptance into a profession are expected to conform and adhere to the codes of conduct of these professional communities. As argued by Teodoro (2011: 10) these “Professions establish the ethical principles and guidelines for practice that professionals are supposed to observe”. These professional bodies using their codes of conduct are, therefore, able to place constraints on the behavior and conduct of their members. As rightly put by Brint (1996: 24), this “disciplinary training and ties out to the occupational group also provide a constraint on the hierarchical control of the organizations professionals work for”. However, this is not the case at all time as sometimes the bureaucratic structure within which these bureaucrat professional’s works are rather able to put constraint on these professional bureaucrats. For the purposes of this work, let’s focus on bureaucrat professionalism, how it has been viewed by various scholars to date and how it impacts on the autonomy and performance of international bureaucrats.

The concept bureaucrat professionalism is a multi-dimensional concept. Even so the concept bureaucrat professionalism is considered a multi-dimensional concept, it is sometimes conceived or equated to mean norms by some scholars. Some of these scholars include, Friedrich (1940), Finer (1936), Brehm and Gates (1997), Meier and O’Toole (2006), Knott and Miller (1987), Kaufman (2006) etc. In the early 20th century, a debate ensued between Friedrich (1940) and Finer (1936) on organizational norms as the most important feature of professionalism. According to Lillvis (2017: 23-24), while citing Friedrich (1940) argued that “the ‘inner check’ of professionalism (i.e., standards, norms) guaranteed bureaucratic accountability ...and that colleagues could ensure that professionals operated within the bounds of the group’s ideals”, Finer

(1936, 1941) in contrast argues that to ensure democratic accountability, organizational norms alone was not enough. He, therefore, as argued by Lillvis (2017: 24) called for the need for “hierarchical institutions to constrain bureaucrats from within rather than rely on enforcement from without”. Similarly, Meier and O’Toole (2006: 104) argued that “the professional-norms variable is in reality a surrogate for bureaucratic values”. In the same vain, Knott and Miller (1987) viewed professionalism from the perspective of norms and highlighted the importance of norms in maintaining professional standards. Similarly, Kaufman (2006) joined the argument on the importance of professional norms in organizations. On his part, he posits that organizational norms remains an important factor in developing, promoting and maintaining “a sense of unity [in agencies] by lessening barriers that may emerge due to difference in status, language, or attitude” (Lillvis, 2017: 24). Even though Kaufman does not downplay the importance of training and expertise in agencies/organization, he argues that the training and expertise only remains an important pre-condition for their employability rather than determining the professionalism or otherwise of an employee. As he rightly puts it, “post-entry training in the Forest Service expands the abilities needed to conform to preformed agency decisions” (Kaufman, 2006: 175).

However, like others, I am of the view that the position espoused by Kaufman and others may not be applicable in some situations and to some research questions. This is because, merely adhering to the norms of a profession does not necessarily make one a professional. A typical example is the medical field. As argued by Lillvis (2017: 25) “one has to first be accepted into the community in order to abide by its norms and receive the benefits of this association. This acceptance requires that the individual obtain a certain level of expertise”.

Also, not only has professionalism been viewed from a norm perspective, it has also been equated to neutrality of the professional bureaucrat by some scholars. Some of these include Moe (1985b), Miller and Whitford (2016), Carr-Saunders and Wilson (1933), Knott and Miller (1987), etc. For example, on the issue of ethical judgments in medicine such as “what lengths physicians should go to prolong human life” (Lillvis, 2017: 25), Carr-Saunders and Wilson (1933: 486) on their part, admonished that “Professional associations should not take sides on these issues, even if all members think alike; if they do so, they are inevitably suspected of being moved by political and not by professional motives”. Further, they argued that professional bodies when confronted with situations like this, should “found their [policy recommendations] on a documented case and present them as the result of a prolonged and serious study upon an appropriate occasion” (Carr-

Saunders and Wilson, 1933: 487). In the same vein, Knott and Miller (1987) equated professionalism to neutrality and described “neutral competence” as a key component and characteristic of bureaucratic professionalism. Similarly, Miller and Whitford (2016: 102) viewed bureaucracies as neutral and argued out how neutrality is to a bureaucracy. In this regard, they argued “delegation to a neutral bureaucracy is the natural form of compromise between competing political perspectives”. No matter how these scholars viewed neutrality as central to professionalism, “professionals, particularly those working within government, are often involved in policy debate where neutrality does not come naturally” (Lillvis, 2017: 27).

On his part, Hall (1967) studied and examined the relationship between bureaucracy and professionalism within organizational setting. His study comprised a work group of 27 with participants from diverse professional fields (lawyers, social workers, nurses etc.) and took place within 3 organizational settings or categories namely (1) autonomous professional organizations; here, the professionals as argued by Scott (1965: 66-67) have “considerable responsibility for defining and implementing the goals, for setting performance standards, and for seeing that standard are maintained”. (2), the heteronomous professional organization; here, the professionals are “subordinated to an administrative framework and the amount of autonomy granted professional employees is relatively small” (66-67). (3), is the professional department which according to Toren (1976: 41) is “part of a larger organization (for instance, a legal or engineering department within the framework of a bureaucratic organization)”. The degree of bureaucratization in each of the three settings varied. Evidence from his findings suggests that professional norms may be strong in bureaucratic settings and weak in non-bureaucratic ones (Toren, 1976: 42).

More so, Engel’s (1968) lends support to and buttress the position that “bureaucracy is not, by definition, detrimental to professional orientation” (Toren, 1976: 42). Engel, (1968) sought to examine how physicians felt about their level of autonomy in three study groups in three different medical environments. In this study, Engel, (1968) argued professional autonomy can be viewed in two angles; i.e. “autonomy with respect to the individual professional and autonomy with respect to the occupational group or profession”. She defined the group level autonomy “as the control an occupational group possesses over its decisions and activities in the community in which it functions, or its freedom to direct the activities of the profession” while she defines the individual level autonomy as the “professional's self-control over both his decisions and his work activities

within a particular work setting, or his freedom to deal with his client” (Engel, 1968: 37). In her findings, she established that;

Professionals in the moderately bureaucratic setting perceived themselves as being more autonomous in their work than their colleagues in the non-bureaucratic setting; those working in the most bureaucratic organization felt least autonomous, as expected. These findings are, again, contrary to the traditional bureaucracy-professionalism-conflict assumption. Engel explains the relationships found by noting that bureaucratic organizations are conducive to the new patterns of modern professional work in supplying essential resources (expensive equipment, funds, administrative facilities), which enable the professional to perform high quality work, thus contributing to his or her feeling of freedom and independence (Toren, 1976: 42).

In other instances, while some scholars see the relationship between the bureaucracy (hierarchical organizations) and professionalism as competing, others have taken the middle position and argue that such a relationship is rather collaborative. For example, Friedson (1970) cited in Toren (1976: 37) holds the view that “professional authority contains element of authority based on technical competence as well as element of bureaucratic authority, insofar as the professionalism is the incumbent of an official licensed position which confers upon him or her the legal right to practice”. To corroborate this, some scholars such as Engel (1970), Friedson (1968) and Kohn (1971) are of the view that professionalism and its associated norms and orientations are “not necessarily reduced in formal organizations, [but] may, under certain circumstances, be enhanced by bureaucratic working conditions” (Toren, 1976: 42).

For the purpose of this study, and in line with the theoretical frameworks used, I adopt Lillvis (2017: 28) definition of bureaucratic professionalism. He defines bureaucratic professionalism as “the extent of self-regulating, networked experts in a policy-relevant field within an executive branch unit (e.g., agency, division, etc.)”. From this definition can be distilled four (4) underlying components in measuring the level of professionalism of the ECOWAS Donor/Development Partner-funded bureaucrat. These indicators are expertise, information-sharing, networks, and self-regulation.

3.4.1 Information-Sharing

Till date, information remains very critical in organizational decision making, policy implementation and evaluation. According to Gailmard and Patty (2013: 1) “information is the lifeblood of executive action ...bedrock of bureaucratic legitimacy in the United States”. As posited by Lillvis (2017: 32) “through information-sharing, a bureaucrat-professional can obtain a greater policy benefit than a non-professional”. Gong, Yang, & Wang (2014: 208) highlighted the importance of information in decision making and argued that “The efficient acquisition and transmission of information is crucial to production control implementation”. They further argued that “a lack of information will lead to various problems and even interrupt the production process” (Gong, Yang, & Wang, 2014: 208). On how the bureaucrat can access the information needed in the performance of their work, Gailmard and Patty (2013) argued that the bureaucrat professional can “acquire it by investing resources in learning, or elicit it from private interests” (Lillvis, 2017: 32).

In the case of private interests, because the bureaucrat professional is a member of a professional body, his/her membership helps in reducing the cost and barriers associated with obtaining information for improved performance. Not only does this membership helps in reducing the cost and challenges associated with accessing information, it also helps the bureaucrat professional “improve upon their expertise, and take advantage of innovations from other [professionals in their network]” which non-professional bureaucrats may not or may have difficulty accessing and thereby impeding their access to strategic knowledge needed in decision making. The professional associations that the bureaucrat professional is a member, help facilitate “acquiring information by providing seminars, [access to] journals, and other professional development resources” (Lillvis, 2017: 31).

From the interview responses, it is clear that the ECOWAS donor/development partner-funded bureaucrat has invested in educating themselves. When asked “What benefits do you derive from your association with these professional organizations?”, all the seven (7) Donor/Development Partner-Funded Bureaucrats interviewed noted information sharing was paramount. It is also evident that the bureaucrat-professionals/[ECOWAS donor/development partner-funded bureaucrats] “have dedicate time to obtaining expertise through specialized degrees and continuing education through professional association” (Lillvis, 2017: 31). In this direction when asked “What

is your professional and educational background?”, all the seven (7) Donor/Development Partner-Funded Bureaucrats at least had a master’s degree in their relevant field of expertise.

3.4.2 Expertise

Expertise is defined as “possessing specific knowledge or skills” (Lillvis, 2017: 3). Notably, because the bureaucrat-professionals has the needed expertise, such expert knowledge “grants [him/her] access to constituting basic rules for cause and effect, distinguishing right from wrong, categorizing social phenomena and advising about good and bad” (Trondal, Murdoch and Geys, 2015: 28). As argued by Lillvis (2017: 31) “through their expertise, bureaucrat-professionals will be able to overcome the potential disruption a new policy brings” to the work they do. Because these bureaucrats (ECOWAS donor/development partner-funded bureaucrat) are expected to operate with a considerable level of autonomy/independence in the discharge of their duties, “prepare dossiers, argue and negotiate on the basis of their professional competences, and legitimate their authority on scientific aptitudes and capabilities”, possessing the needed expertise/knowledge and competence in their area of specialization is crucial to asserting their autonomy. This is because such “knowledge agents [are expected to have] intrinsic governance capacities ...to define problems ...or engage in standard-setting, rule-making, or other regulatory activity” (Stone, 2012: 329 cited in Trondal et al., 2015: 26).

Based on the responses from the interviewees on the questions “What is your professional and educational background?” and “What is your current role in ECOWAS, and how long have you served in this role?”, I established that the interviewees (ECOWAS donor/development partner-funded bureaucrats) have the needed skills in their area of work. All the 7 ECOWAS donor/development partner funded bureaucrats displayed their know how or knowledge about their respective roles, profession and the positions they occupy. I also asked the respondents their previous work experience and their level of education. Based on their responses, I established that the ECOWAS donor/development partner-funded bureaucrats have the needed expertise both academically and experience wise. The professional and educational experience of the interviewees (ECOWAS donor/development partner-funded bureaucrats) “indicate that they are in a good position to judge the benefits and constraints of belonging to a profession” (Lillvis, 2017: 30).

3.4.3 Networking

Apart from information sharing which Lellvis (2017) pinpoints as a key benefit of associating with a professional body, he additionally mentions the power of networking as a benefit that equally accrues to a bureaucrat professional belonging to a professional body.

Professional entities are often made up of individual professionals who work in similar areas and with a common central expertise. Owing to the general interdependence, individual bureaucrats enjoy several benefits than their counterparts who do not belong to any professional group. Lillvis (2017: 33) describes these benefits more succinctly, “as the political economy of the bureaucrat-professional will remain largely intact, the costs of rulemaking are less than those faced by a bureaucrat without professional ties”. Because of the networking opportunity at the disposal of the bureaucrat professional, they are able to get support in the form of advice and collaboration from other networked members when confronted with a challenge in the discharge of their duty. By this support and assistance enjoyed through this networking, the bureaucrat professional is able to develop attachment both to fellow experts, norms of the professional association and live up to the expectations of an expert in the discharge of their duty. This network of professionals as argued by Carpenter (2001: 15) help “reduce their dependence on elected officials”.

3.4.4 Self-Regulation

“An important issue in the literature concerning professions is whether bureaucracies affect professionalism and the quality of the services which professionals provide” (Engel, 1969: 30). Several scholars “view bureaucracy as detrimental to the professions and suggest that professional standards and/or values diminish under the influence of bureaucratic structure” (Engel, 1969: 30). The problem is “that the limiting administrative structure of the bureaucracy restricts the professional's freedom and makes him dependent on the organization which, in turn, controls him and inhibits the application of his knowledge and skills (Engel, 1969: 30).

To avert this, professional bodies need to establish internal control mechanisms and checks to regulate the conduct and behavior of its member in order to maintain the integrity of the profession. This can take the form of sanctioning their members through revocation of license or membership from the profession. This is what Lillvis (2017: 34) describes as “Self-regulation”. Self-regulation applies in situations “where the profession has the ability to guard access to entry and to police the behavior of its own members so that its expertise remains legitimate” (Lellvis, 2017: 34). Here,

the argument is that where the bureaucrat belongs to a professional body which has a requisite supervisory ability to check the conduct of the bureaucrat, the tendency for the bureaucrat to exhibit professionalism on the job is high. As opined by Lillvis (2017: 36) “bureaucrat-professionals who have regulatory authority will likely take great care to guard and maintain it”. As opined by Lillvis (2017), this goes a long way to enable the professional act independently of the political actors (principals) while at the same time acting in line with the regulations of a larger professional body. He further makes the point that,

Self-regulation, in the form of reputation, is a double-edged sword for the bureaucrat-professional. A positive professional reputation provides job security and in response, the bureaucrat-professional will be able to take the regulatory actions he or she sees fit. At times, the professional community’s consensus on a particular health policy may differ from a state’s policy. The bureaucrat-professional will likely feel some pressure to act in accordance with the profession and promulgate a rule to change the policy. Yet, the bureaucrat-professional will also be mindful of the potential damage to the profession’s reputation if he or she pushed forward in the face of countervailing political forces (Lillvis, 2017: 36).

It is my view that no matter how stringent a profession may be, in terms of the internal control mechanisms aimed at regulating the conduct and behavior of its member in order to maintain the integrity of the profession, some variations and defects exist. Carlin (1966), in his work *Lawyers’ Ethics: A Survey of the New York City Bar* studied how lawyers who practice privately are able to conform to their professional codes of conduct. The study had a sample of more than 800 lawyers in private practice. His studies established that, when in large organizations, these lawyers conformed to the established codes of conduct of their profession. The data from his study further revealed that “those who work in large law firms are more likely to conform to ethical norms of the profession than those who work in small firms or are in solo practice” (Engel, 1969: 32).

In direct reference to the study, to comprehensively analyze the independence of the ECOWAS bureaucrat professional, it will be worthwhile to explore the checks and balances instituted by the professional body of the bureaucrat professional (if any) aimed at bringing the conduct of the professional under the control of a larger professional body. As opined by Lillvis (2017), this goes

a long way to enable the professional act independently in line with the regulations of a larger professional body.

3.5 Theoretical framework

3.5.1 Introduction

The main aim of my thesis lies in establishing new knowledge about the independence of donor funded bureaucrats in ECOWAS. This chapter sets out the theoretical framework underlying this analysis. Specifically, this study will employ Principal-Agent Theory and the Theory of Bureaucrat Professionalism in analyzing the relationship between donor funded bureaucrats and the donor recipient body. In the next sections, I will discuss the main aspects of both theories, and highlight their relevance to my central research questions as set out in Chapter 1. Throughout the discussion, I will therefore link both theories to the issue of donor funded bureaucrats whenever possible.

3.5.2 The Principal Agency Theory (PAT)

PAT basically explains the ideal way of organizing relationships (Macias, 2012) between a principal and an agent, where the principal gives out the work and the agent carries out the work with the hope that the agent will act in the best interest of the principal (Jensen & Meckling, 1976; Eisenhardt, 1989). As defined more specifically by Eisenhardt (1989, p. 58) the Principal Agency theory focuses on relationship where “one party (the principal) delegates work to another (the agent), who performs that work” on behalf of the principal. An agreement is then prepared on the necessary resources to be given to the agent to enable the agent to complete the task. The agreement is always in the form of a contract and forms the unit of analysis for the relationship between the principal and the agent. (Macias, 2012). A critical problem to address in such principal-agent relationships and contracts concerns an asymmetry or incompleteness of information (Eisenhardt, 1989) as well as the need for some degree of risk sharing (Arrow, 1971; Wilson, 1968; Moe, 1984). The various components of the theory are summarized in the table below:

Table: 3.0 Components of the Principal Agency theory

Central idea	Principal-agent relationships reflect how to best organize (contract) tasks and activities an agent will complete for a principal at a set cost.
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Unit of analysis	Contract between principal and agent
Human Assumptions	Self-interest. Bounded rationality. Risk aversion.
Organizational assumptions	Partial goal conflict among participants. Efficiency as the effectiveness criterion. Information asymmetry between principal and agent.
Information assumptions	Information as a purchasable commodity
Contracting problem	Agency (moral hazard and adverse selection). Risk sharing (shirking).
Problem domain	Relationships in which the principal and agent have partly differing goals and risk preferences (e.g. compensation, regulation, leadership, impression management, whistle blowing, vertical integration, transfer pricing).

Source: Eisenhardt, M. K. (1989)

3.5.3 Unit of Analysis: Principal Agent Contract

The contract principally serves as the unit of engagement of the parties. As noted by Macias, (2012) it can either be explicit (written document) or implicit (an oral agreement of understanding). Perrow (1986) notes that the main purposes of the contract are a) outlining the tasks for the agent and b) introducing the means through which the agent will be compensated.

3.5.4 Assumptions of PAT Theory

Available literature on Principal Agent Theory depicts two critical assumptions. The existence of (a) informational asymmetries and (b) goal conflicts (Moe, 1984; Eisenhart, 1989; Waterman and Meier 1998).

3.5.4.1 Goal Conflict: Paul (2006) hints that an agency problem always arises owing to differences in interest between the task executioner (agents) and those on whose behalf the tasks are performed

(principals). This is where the desires and interest of both parties' conflict. Macias, (2012) asserts that the objective of the principal is for the agent to put in maximum effort to complete the task. However, the agent acts with self-interest and has an inherent incentive to produce at the minimum acceptable level. For example, donor funded bureaucrats may offer recommendations, deliver or carry out their duty in a way to ensure continued reliance of ECOWAS on the Donor Organization in order to prolong their contract with the Donor Organization that procured their services on behalf of ECOWAS. There is always a higher tendency for the agent to satisfy his own utility at the expense of the principal. Peterson (1993) notes that as a result of the self-seeking agenda of the agent, the principal faces an obligation to ensure that the agent complies with the contract.

3.5.4.2 Information Asymmetry: As emphasized by Waterman and Meier (1998) information asymmetries are claims that the agent possesses superior information than their principals. Eggertsson (1990) further asserts that the PAT thrives on the assumption that the agent has better information about the details of individual tasks assigned to said agent, as well as the Agent's own actions, abilities and preferences. The underlying assumption is that the principal generally faces difficulties in obtaining information possessed by the agent. As Waterman & Meier, (1998) put it, goal conflicts and information asymmetry are "the spark plugs" of agency theory as they create what is called the agency problem (Waterman & Meier, 1998). PAT argues that given a situation of incomplete information and uncertainty, two problems usually arise:

3.5.4.3 Moral Hazard

Moral hazard refers to hidden action by either of the parties (Mooney, 1994). In the execution of a project, each party has the opportunity to gain from acting contrary to the dictates of the agreement. As Eisenhardt (1989) put it, the principal cannot ascertain if the agent is putting up his best effort in the execution. For example, ECOWAS cannot determine if the donor funded bureaucrat is executing the project to his best ability or whether he continues to act with the best interest of the donor (rather than ECOWAS) in mind during his day-to-day activities.

3.5.4.4 Adverse Selection

Bergen (1992) explains that prior to the commencement of any programme, the principal is of the view that the full details of the task and the abilities needed to execute the task is known to him. Adverse selection arises from the principal's doubt regarding the agent's true abilities and plans for

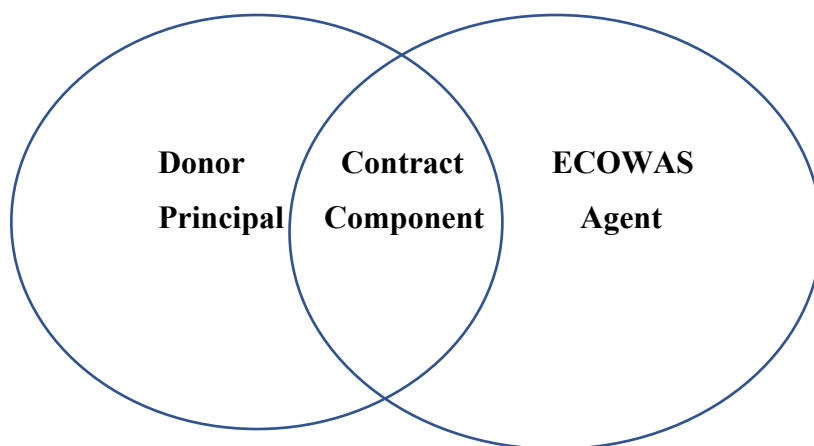
the project. For example, the Donor Country or Organization will find it difficult in determining which agent (Bureaucrat) is available and ready for the execution of which task. Though the professional background of the bureaucrat may be known, there is no yardstick for ascertaining the true intent of the Bureaucrat or the recipient (ECOWAS).

3.6 Principal Agency Theory, ECOWAS, the Donor and the Donor Bureaucrat

Extant literature depicts a vast usage of the Principal Agency model in several studies on bureaucracy and foreign aid (Meier & Bohte 2006; Moe1995; Gailmard, 2012; Cook & Wood1989; De Groot, 1988; Weingast, 1984; Johnston, 2011).

In direct relation to this study, in a simple relationship between a Donor (International Organizations or Country) and a recipient (ECOWAS), the Donor is deemed as the principal whiles the recipient (ECOWAS) is deemed the agent. This is depicted in figure 3.1.

Figure 3.1 Diagrammatic view of the relationship between a Donor and ECOWAS.



Source: Researchers creation based on the principal agent concept.

The contract components illustrate that the Donor (principal) will provide funding, superintend over funding allocations and set expectations. On the contrary, the agent provides information on his delivery to the principal (provide report task).

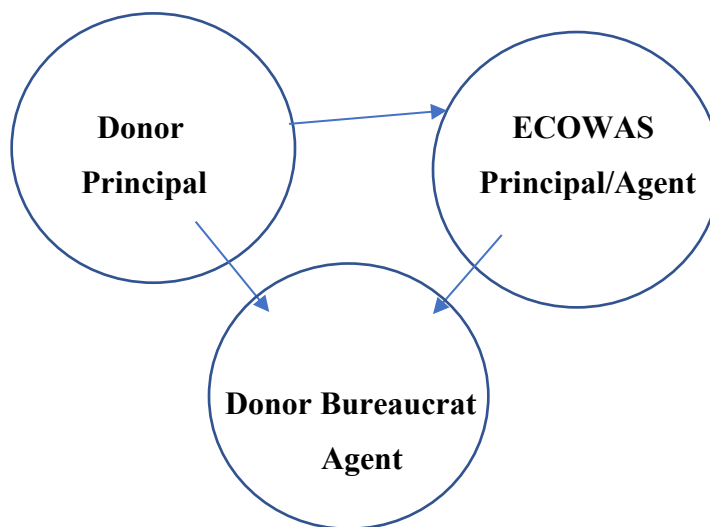
Clearly however, the principal agent relationship may at times not be a simple relationship involving a single principal and a single agent. It may involve a more complex multiple-principal-single-agent or single-agent-multiple- principal relationships (Mason & Slack, 2003). For

example, one lawyer (Agent) can have a number of principals (clients). Similarly, one principal can have a number of agents. For instance, one patient (principal) may have several doctor (agents).

Johnston (2011) equally points to a more complex relationship in which the Principals and agents may at times have dual roles. Here, the principal can act concurrently as some other principals' agents, and agents as some other agents' principals. This study employs this analogy to explore the relationship between ECOWAS, the Donor and the Bureaucrat. An analysis of this relationship will assist the researcher in ascertaining the independence or otherwise of the donor funded bureaucrat (see figure 3.2).

In the circles of ECOWAS, the Donor (International Organizations and Individual Country) and the donor funded bureaucrat, the bureaucrat is an agent acting in the stead of both the Donor (Principal) and the recipient (ECOWAS-Principal). Since ECOWAS becomes the ultimate beneficiary of the work to be executed by the Bureaucrat, it will be imprudent to deem ECOWAS as an agent. In this analogy, the principal, ECOWAS Commission is the agent of another principal (Donor: International Organizations or Country). Similarly, the agent (Bureaucrat) has two principals (the Donor: International Organizations or Country and the ECOWAS Commission). The major problem with such a complex relationship is usually how to ensure that each unit gives their maximum best to achieve desired aims (Johnston, 2011). In my case, given that the bureaucrat has two principals, how can one principal (ECOWAS) be sure that the donor funded bureaucrat working in ECOWAS Commission remains independent from the other principal (the donor organization).

Figure: 3.2 Diagrammatic view of the relationship between the Donor, ECOWAS and the Donor Bureaucrat.



Source: Own creation based on the principal agent concept.

3.7 Bureaucrats Professionalism Theory

This study additionally employs some basic concepts of Bureaucrat Professionalism Theory in assessing the independence of the donor funded bureaucrats.

The Theory of Professionalism was first given prominence in the work of Carr-Saunders and Wilson in 1933. In their work captioned ‘The Professions’, they define Professionalism as ‘the existence of specialized intellectual techniques, acquired as the result of prolonged training’ (Carr-Saunders and Wilson, 1933: 284-285). They further opine that professionals obey codes of conduct established by a larger professional body. This view was further corroborated by Brint (1996). He asserts that Professionals are “people whose ties to the skills and cultures of an organized occupational group provide structure for markets for professional labor” (Brint, 1996: 24). The disciplinary training that professional go through and the bond/ties they have with the occupational group also serves as a constraint on the hierarchical control of the organization’s professionals work for. In other words, the strength of their behavioral role as professionals might help mitigate the influence of behavioral roles imposed or desired by their organization (Trondal 2006).

The aforementioned definitions significantly point to certain key elements of the theory of professionalism, which is: expertise and the availability of a body that puts in place cultural norms

to regulate the conduct of professionals within their fold. An elaborate reflection of this form of professionalism was described by Teodoro (2011) as follows:

‘Professionals are persons with specialized scientific, technical, or other formal education, whose labor value is reducible to their expertise in providing some knowledge-based service. Professionals form organizations, or professional societies, to facilitate information exchange and to self-regulate or seek government regulation. Professions establish the ethical principles and guidelines for practice that professionals are supposed to observe. Professions also define professionals’ paths to career advancement to a greater or lesser extent’ (Teodoro, 2011: 10).

Teodoro (2011) thus corroborates the work of Carr-Saunders and Wilson (1993) and Brint (1996), who also refer to development of expertise and adhering to cultural norms (principles) as key ingredients of professionals. Bureaucratic professionalism however involves a more complex scenario in which the individual of a professional group is also a part of the bureaucracy. (Lillvis, 2017). Lillvis (2017) opines that, the component of bureaucratic professionalism are expertise, information-sharing, networks and self-regulation.

3.8 Key Components of Bureaucrat Professionalism Theory

3.8.1 Expertise

Lillvis, (2017: 30) define expertise as ‘possessing specific knowledge or Skills’. He emphasizes that this expertise is legitimized by one’s profession. Essentially, the bureaucrat must have the requisite skill set and knowledge relevant to their area of focus. Lillvis (2017) contends that as a result of their expertise, bureaucrat professionals will be detect and deal with possible disturbances a new policy brings to their work. He further argues that a disruption comes about when the bureaucrat does not have the required expertise to handle policy changes or to learn quickly on the job. Similarly, the independence of the bureaucrat may be in tatters when the bureaucrat lacks the expertise to analyze the consequence of their actions. Invariably, adequate expertise on the job, is a crucial element for acting independently.

In direct relation to the study, the bureaucrat professional who is discharging a responsibility for ECOWAS is expected to have a certain level of expertise in his or her area of specialization. As emphasized by Lillvis (2017), the bureaucrat professional must have possessed specific skill set to

be able to independently execute the required task and subject his actions to his or her professional judgement.

3.8.2 Networking and Information Sharing

Bureaucrats must know how to ‘implement, interpret or prescribe policy’. The independence of an uninformed bureaucrat can often be compromised as information is an important part of developing one’s expertise. To this end, Gailmard and Patty (2013) outline two important ways by which bureaucrats can get to be well informed: by learning it personally or soliciting information from private interests.

Lillvis (2017) argues that membership with a professional association helps bureaucrats to share ideas and pass on relevant policy directives to each other. Membership in a professional association helps to lessen the cost involved in eliciting information.

In relation to the study, the study will seek to ascertain avenues by which the ECOWAS bureaucrat professional accesses information. As noted by Lillvis (2017) being a member of a professional body is a sure way of acquiring and sharing information with other professionals. To this end, the professional membership of the ECOWAS bureaucrat professional is deemed a crucial means by which the bureaucrat assesses and shares information. Thus, the study will seek to explore this as well.

With regards to networking, Professional entities are often made up of individual professionals who work in similar areas and with a common central expertise. Owing to the general interdependence, individual bureaucrats enjoy several benefits than their counterparts who do not belong to any professional group. Lillvis (2017: 33) describes these benefits more succinctly, ‘as the political economy of the bureaucrat-professional will remain largely intact, the costs of rulemaking are less than those faced by a bureaucrat without professional ties’.

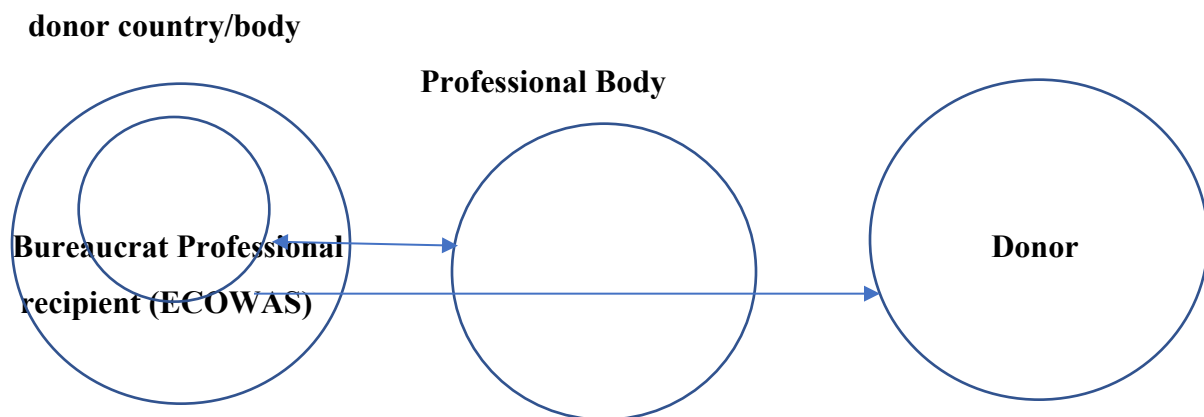
Apart from information sharing which Lellvis (2017) pinpoints as a key benefit of associating with a professional body, he additionally mentions the power of networking as a benefit that equally accrues to a bureaucrat professional belonging to a professional body. In this stead, the study will equally explore the numerous benefits that accrue to the bureaucrat professional by virtue of his or her association with a professional body and the likely impact this has on the overall independence of the ECOWAS bureaucrat.

3.8.3 Self-Regulation

This refers to the ability of the profession to regulate entry and to supervise the behavior of its own members in order for its expertise to remain sincere. Here, the argument is that, where the bureaucrat belongs to a professional body which has a requisite supervisory ability to check the conduct of the bureaucrat, the tendency for the bureaucrat to exhibit professionalism on the job is high. Professionals can put the right checks and balances in place: by sanctioning their members through revocation of license or membership (Lillvis, 2017).

In direct reference to the study, to comprehensively analyze the independence of the ECOWAS bureaucrat professional, it will be worthwhile to explore the checks and balances instituted by the professional body of the bureaucrat professional (if any) aimed at bringing the conduct of the professional under the control of a larger professional body. As opined by Lillvis (2017), this goes a long way to enable the professional act independently in line with the regulations of a larger professional body.

Figure 3.3 below reflects the relationship between the bureaucrat, the donor country/body, a professional body and the donor recipient (ECOWAS) as described in the literature.



Source: Own creation based on Lillvis (2017) Bureaucrat Professionalism Theory

CHAPTER 4

METHODOLOGY

4.0 Introduction

This section sets out the various research tools and the methodology used to achieve the objectives in the study. The chapter commences with a detailed analysis on the research approach and design of the study. It also presents the sample size after a discussion on the population and sampling technique. Data collection procedure and sources of data is presented but that is preceded by a discussion on the data collection instruments. The chapter subsequently discusses the reliability of the study and ends with a discussion on the various research ethics adopted while conducting the study.

4.1 Research Approach

Two major research approaches are at the disposal of a researcher: Quantitative and qualitative (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004; Vanderstoep and Johnson, 2008). However, a third approach exists namely Mixed Method (Creswell, 2014 & Liamputtong, 2009). Kumar, (1999) argues that the choice of either quantitative or qualitative method is often dependent on the purpose of the study, how the variables are measured and how the information is analyzed. Babbie (2004) corroborating the view of Kumar (1999) asserts that the research approach for a study should not just be influenced by the preference of the researcher but the aim of the research as well.

Quantitative Research is the most common amongst the research approaches mentioned above (Williams, 2007). Allwood (2012) explains that it focuses mainly on deducing point or interval estimates from the data collected - for instance, from a survey or real-world statistical data – using inferential statistical tools. On the other hand, Qualitative Research is focused on describing, decoding and translating a phenomenon in the form of meaning rather than frequency (Malhotra and Birks, 2006). Essentially, qualitative research concerns itself with providing detailed insight into complicated (psychological, political, social etc.) issues and is most essential for gaining answers to humanistic questions. The qualitative approach therefore enables the researcher to understand the manner in which humans interpret their social world (Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill, 2009).

Having explored the characteristics of both quantitative and qualitative methods a qualitative method was employed to explore the independence of the ECOWAS donor funded bureaucrats. The choice of a qualitative method is largely because of its greater exploratory nature. Since the topic of donor bureaucrats has received little to no attention thus far in academic work, an exploratory research design is most appropriate. Qualitative research is deemed more applicable to this kind of exploratory research because it largely focuses “on gaining familiarity with the subject area” and acquires “insights for more rigorous investigation at a later stage” (Collis and Hussey, 2003).

The choice of qualitative research was also in line with the aim to provide an in-depth analysis of a very specific question. Qualitative research is ideal when the aim of a researcher is to fully understand, determine and describe a specific issue – in this case, the independence of the ECOWAS donor funded bureaucrats.

4.2 Research Design

The research design can best be described as the key that guides the entire research process. It reflects the framework for collection, measurement, and analysis of data in order to answer research questions (Copper & Schindler, 2001; Orodho, 2003; Ankrah, 2014). Most basically, one can distinguish between exploratory, explanatory (or conclusive) and mixed research designs (which combine elements of both). These various research designs have their respective benefits, and neither of them is better than the other (Cassell & Symon, 2006). The choice of research design should be taken with respect to the fundamental objective(s) of the researcher.

Owing to the purpose and objective of the study, this research will employ exploratory research design in order to explore into greater detail the phenomenon of the autonomy of donor funded bureaucrats. Stebbins (2001) argued “exploratory research is employed when the phenomenon under consideration is still poorly understood”. In addition to the prevailing conditions (absence of or limited study) necessitating the use of exploratory research design, the choice of exploratory research design is also influenced by “the flexibility and informal structure that characterizes exploratory research (Osei 2017: 81).

The methods employed in conducting exploratory research include focus group interviews, in-depth interviews, projective techniques and literature search (Dudovskiy, 2016; Kothari, 2004). In

this research, I will predominantly rely on semi-structured in-depth interviews with open-ended questions. One reason for this choice is that according to Osei (2017: 83), “the open-ended questions and probing in exploratory research allows participants enough room to elaborate and give greater detail or information than quantitative fixed methods”. As such, this technique provides the potential to gain a rich source of data, allows for necessary flexibility to probe deeper during the interview, and as such to go deep into the case at hand.

Even though findings from exploratory research - unlike carefully and representatively conducted quantitative studies - cannot be generalized to the larger population, Stebbins (2001) opines that the findings in exploratory research can be generalized to the specific group or situation being studied and not the general population. Important from my perspective, exploratory research also allows for theoretical development and setting out future research avenues aimed at further developing the insights obtained in the exploratory study.

4.3 Source of Data and Method of Data Collection

Two types of data collection methods are available to a researcher: Primary data and secondary data. Hox & Boeijs (2005) opine that primary data are data collected for the precise research problem at hand using procedures that best fit the research problem. Secondary data consist of data originally collected by others but employed by another person(s) to work with it to make different interpretations, understanding, and analysis. Whereas secondary data has the advantage of being less costly and readily accessible, it may be less useful when it was originally collected to address different research questions. With secondary data one must also be careful to obtain sufficiently detailed information on the data sources and the context within which the data was collected. This is critical for the correct interpretation of such data with regard to a different research question.

This study employs primary and secondary data source. The primary data for the study was collected with the help of semi-structured in-depth interviews using open questions (see also previous section). The topics addressed in these interviews were related to the background of the respondent, their duties and activities in ECOWAS, their engagement in professional bodies, and their self-perceived autonomy. The exact questions presented to respondents in these interviews are attached to this thesis in appendix 1. Each interview lasted between 35-40 minutes. This was done to ensure that the interviewees were not rushed in given their responses but rather given

enough time to offer the best possible honest answers. The secondary data employed in this study involved information on contracted donor funded bureaucrats and other bureaucrats obtained from the ECOWAS Human Resource Department. This data source helped in identifying the objects of the study using purposive sampling.

4.4 Sampling Design

This section is dedicated to a discussion of my study population, sampling size and sampling technique. These three elements are very crucial for any study, since they indicate key information about the respondents included in my interview sample.

4.4.1 Study Population

Bell & Bryman (2007) indicate a study population is the world of units from which the sample is to be selected for the research. It refers to the total number of all units of the phenomenon to be investigated (Kumekpor, 2002). Snijders and Bosker (1999) also define a population as the entire group of persons having the characteristic or characteristics that interest a researcher.

Evidence from the 2016 Annual Report of the ECOWAS Commission points to ECOWAS Commission as having a total staff strength of 720 as at 25th October 2016. There are 361 contract staff, representing 50.1%. Donor funded staff is a subset of such contract staff. While such staff is not explicitly differentiated in ECOWAS annual reports or financial controller reports, donor grants and assistance generally reflect approximately 5-10% of the total income of ECOWAS (Financial Controller report, various years). While not all of these grants translate into personnel positions, it would be fair to expect fewer than 5% of ECOWAS staff to be donor funded bureaucrats. These donor funded bureaucrats constitute the population of the study, as well as the sampling frame from which my respondents are drawn (Turner, 2003).

4.4.2 Sample Size and Sample Size Determination

Sampling is related to the selection of a subset of individuals from a broader population (Sukamolson, 2007).

There is no universally agreed sample size for qualitative research interviews. However, leading qualitative research scholars have suggested guidelines to follow in setting sample size and argued

that adequate sample size is attained when data saturation is reached (Patton, 2002; Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Morse, 2000). Data saturation “entails bringing new participants continually into the study until the dataset is completed, as indicated by data replication or redundancy” (Marshall, Cardon, Poddar, & Fontenot, 2013: 11). Stated differently, data saturation refers to a point in qualitative data analysis where researchers come to the realization that additional sample will not add any new dimension to the already acquired responses in answering the set research questions. Further, qualitative researchers argue that several factors influence the sample size researchers need to reach a point of saturation. Some of these factors include “the nature and scope of the [research]... quality of interviews, number of interviews per participant, sampling procedures, and researcher experience” (Marshall, Cardon, Poddar, & Fontenot, 2013).

Accessibility to respondents is often a considerable constraint on the sample size that can be achieved. Also, in this study, it was not easy to gain access to the desired respondents. In the end, this study used a sample size of Ten (10) respondents comprising seven donor funded bureaucrats and three senior staff members of the ECOWAS Commission. A total of fifteen respondents were contacted for face-to-face interviews. However, due to their busy work schedule and convenience, ten out of the fifteen people contacted agreed to participate while five declined to participate in any form of interview. These people were contacted via phone. Out of the ten, nine agreed to participate in a face-to-face interview whereas one agreed to respond via email.

4.4.3 Sampling Technique

Several types of sampling exist namely, purposive sampling, random sampling, and quota sampling (Sudman 1976; Sukamolson, 2007; Creswell, 2014). However, two main types of sampling techniques exist. These are probability and non-probability sampling.

Saunders (2012) explains that probability sampling is the type of sampling where each population member has a known probability of being selected (Saunders, 2012). Bryman and Bell (2003) pinpoints the strength of probability sampling by stating that it ensures that the sampling error is reduced. The main types of probability sampling techniques identified in literature are: Simple Random, Stratified, Systematic and Cluster sampling.

Conversely, non-probability sampling represents a sampling technique “in which each member of the sampling frame does not have an equal chance of being selected as a participant in the study”

(VanderStoep & Johnston, 2009). Compared to probability sampling, non-probability sampling is cost and time effective. As argued by Kothari (2004: 72), it is the preferred sampling technique “in small inquiries and [research studies] ...because of the relative advantage of time and money inherent in this method of sampling”. Considering that the donor fund-bureaucrats constitutes approximately less than 5% of the ECOWAS Commission staff, it was more appropriate to use non-probability sampling technique.

According to Latham (2007), adopting the correct sampling method has the advantage of reducing the cost incurred in a research study as well as promoting greater feasibility, accuracy and time efficiency. However, it is important to know that a researcher’s choice to use any of these two techniques is dependent on the purpose of the study.

Whereas Babie (1990) outlines three types of non-probability sampling namely (purposive, quota and convenience sampling), Fink (1995) identifies four types namely (convenience, snowball sampling, quota sampling and focus group). As explained by Etikan, Musa, & Alkassim, (2016), purposive sampling involves a sampling technique where the researcher selects the elements to be included in the sample based on his or her belief that they exhibit characteristics suitable for the study.

For my analysis, non-probability-sampling was employed in selecting the sample. More specifically, purposive sampling was used to select 10 respondents, comprising 7 donor funded bureaucrats and 3 Senior Members of ECOWAS. Malhotra, (2007) explains that purposive sampling involves a sampling technique where the researcher selects the elements to be included in the sample based on his or her believe that they exhibit characteristics suitable for the study. The purposive sampling technique was most appropriate because, the researcher was in need of the most appropriate personnel who has in-depth knowledge of the role of donor funded bureaucrats in the ECOWAS Commission. More so, purposive sampling technique unlike snowball sampling, was used in selecting the respondents because of their possessed characteristics (ECOWAS donor funded bureaucrats and Senior Members of ECOWAS with in-depth knowledge about the role of the ECOWAS donor funded bureaucrats) and the small nature of the sample size.

4.5 Data Analysis

The data collected by the qualitative researcher can be analyzed in several ways (Saunders, Thornhill & Lewis, 2007). Some of these options include thematic analysis, template analysis, grounded theory, analytic induction and narrative analysis. This study used the thematic analysis approach. Creswell (2007) explains that the thematic analysis approach presents a detailed description of the cases under different themes reflecting the objectives of the study.

To begin with, I immersed myself into the data by listening to each interview (audio data) twice to identify myself with the data collected. Transcription of all data was done during the second listening. The transcribed data was read and re-read to help me get a general feeling or idea about what each respondent said under the respective research questions. This was done through a process called coding, where labels are attached to lines or a feature of the data of text/data so that the researcher can group and compare similar or related pieces of information. This is because the goal of qualitative data analysis is to “reduce or condense the data into a manageable manner by identifying significant patterns, and finally drawing meaning from data and subsequently building a logical chain of evidence” (Abubakar, Douglas & Sani, 2018: 214). Not only were the transcribed data read over to help me get a general feeling or idea about what each respondent said under the respective research question, but it also helped in highlighting items of potential interest as well as removing words or phrases that blurred the overall meaning and understanding of the data.

Following Creswell (2007), the detailed descriptions of cases were grouped under different themes in line with the research questions; The autonomy of the ECOWAS donor funded bureaucrat, the professionalism of the ECOWAS donor funded bureaucrat and the challenges associated with exhibiting professionalism among ECOWAS donor funded bureaucrats.

4.6 Quality of Research

Scholars such as Yin (2003), Creswell (2013), Bryman (2012) etc. have outlined various ways of judging the quality of research designs. Some of these criteria include generalizability, Construct Validity, Internal validity, External Validity, reliability etc. However, for the purposes this study, validity, reliability and generalizability were adopted in assessing the quality and appropriateness of the research design used in this study. More so, a chain of evidence was maintained to achieve

the aforementioned validity. According to Gyima (2019: 44) “the maintenance of a chain of evidence refers to principle whereby external observers are able to follow the derivation of any evidence by tracing the steps in either direction (from conclusions back to research questions or vice versa)”.

4.6.1 Validity

According to Gyimah (2019: 42) “Qualitative validity refers to the techniques and strategies the research employs in checking the accuracy of the findings”. This is in sync with what Yin (2003) refers to as construct validity. He argues construct validity deals with “establishing correct operational measures for the concept being established” (Yin, 2003).

To improve and achieve this validity, firstly, I conducted literature review on the relevant concepts underlying the study (bureaucratic autonomy and bureaucratic professionalism), defined and operationalized them in line with the research questions and objectives of the study. This review of literature was also done to help me understand the phenomenon (bureaucratic autonomy and bureaucratic professionalism) under study before conducting the interviews. Furthermore, to increase the construct validity of this study, I employed multiple referent (triangulation) in validating the responses given. While seven (7) Donor Funded-Bureaucrats served as the key informants or principal respondents, additional three (3) Donor Funded-Bureaucrats were interviewed and posed the same questions and their responses were used in validating the responses given by the seven. This is because as argued by Gyimah (2019: 43) “findings or conclusions of studies (especially case studies) are most likely to be more convincing and accurate if it is based on several different sources of information”.

4.6.2 Reliability

Reliability refers to the extent to which a study when repeated will produce the same or similar results. To achieve this, Yin (2003:38) argues that the researcher must document all the procedure he/she followed throughout the study. Following from Yin (2003), to improve the reliability of this study, I developed an interview guide, carefully recorded the interviews with tape recorders for easy reference and notes were also taken and documented during data collection. Also important to improving the reliability of a study, is maintaining a chain of evidence. As argued by Gyimah (2019: 44) “. The maintenance of a chain of evidence refers to principle whereby external

observers are able to follow the derivation of any evidence by tracing the steps in either direction (from conclusions back to research questions or vice versa)". Following from this, all relevant literature used in this study are well cited to help the reader trace and authenticate the sources of information used.

4.6.3 Generalization (External Validity)

In quantitative studies as argued by Djupvik (2012: 68), the focus is on statistical generalization, "where the question is whether it is possible to generalize from a sample to a universe, and what rules of method are to be followed". Onwuegbuzie, Johnson, & Collins (2009: 882-883) on the other hand argues that the goal of qualitative research is to "obtain insights into particular educational, social, and familial processes and practices that exist within a specific location and context" and not to generalize to the general or wider population. As argued by Gyimah (2019: 44) "one of the main problems associated with case studies is the inability to make scientific generalizations beyond cases to wider populations. Because the focus of this study is to understand the extent of autonomy of the ECOWAS donor funded bureaucrats and to overcome the problems associated with generalizing qualitative research findings, this study will hesitate in offering umbrella generalization. Therefore, considering the sampling technique, sample size (10 respondents of which 7 were donor funded bureaucrats and 3 senior members of ECOWAS) and the focus of the study, its findings cannot be generalized to the larger population of donor funded bureaucrats globally. As argued by Stebbins (2001), such findings particularly in exploratory studies can be generalized to the group under study and the situation being studied.

4.7 Ethical Considerations

Dobbin (2017, p. 64) posits that research ethics are the "norms of conduct that differentiate between acceptable and unacceptable behavior". To ensure this, several measures were put in place to ensure that ethical requirements were observed throughout the study. These were guided by the three ethical principles of Denscombe (2009): avoiding deception and misrepresentation, seeking the informed consent of the respondents to ensure that the respondents are not forced to participate, as well as ensuring the anonymity of respondents to ensure their security.

More specifically, the respondents were briefed about the purpose of the study. Similarly, the researcher sought the consent of all the participants prior to the interviews. The respondents were

briefed about the purpose of the study. Green (2002) defines informed consent as the prospective subject's agreement to participate voluntarily in a study, which is reached after provision of essential information about the study. All the respondents were notified that participation was voluntary and their right to decline participation.

Finally, the anonymity of the participants was maintained throughout the study. Creswell (1994) opines that anonymity of a respondent is when the subjects cannot be linked, even by the researcher, with his or her individual responses. In this study anonymity was observed by not attaching the names of the participants to the information they provided. All the respondents of the study were represented with a code representing their organizational affiliation in order not to reveal their identity.

Tab. 4.0 Code of respondents

Designation	Code of respondent
World Health Organization	WHOR
Migration EU Expertise (MIEUX)	MEUR
USAID- Technical and financial support	USDR
FAO (Food and agricultural Organization of the UN)	FAOR
World Bank Office Procurement Team (Abuja, Nigeria)	WBOR
World Trade Organization	WTO
UNICEF	UNI
Human Resource Manager (HR)	HRM
Programme Officer - Resource Mobilization	POR
Programme Officer-Relations with Permanent and Special Representative	POPS

CHAPTER FIVE

ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

5.0 Introduction

This chapter presents the analysis and presentation of data gathered through in-depth interviews with the aim of providing answers to the research questions. The responses of the respondents have been categorized into suitable subheadings in line with the objectives of the study as follows: As portrayed in other studies, the autonomy of the bureaucrat forms an essential part of the overall assessment of the professionalism of the bureaucrat. However, owing to the high emphasis placed on the autonomy of the bureaucrat in this study, it is presented and discussed separately.

5.1 The Autonomy of the ECOWAS Donor Funded Bureaucrat

As already discussed in chapter 3 (literature review) of this study, the literature on bureaucratic autonomy presents no consensus on the meaning, definition, nature and measurement mechanism of the subject (Lillvis, 2017; Maggetti & Verhoest, 2014). Aimed at avoiding the challenge of finding a comprehensive definition for such a multifaceted concept (Verhoest et al., 2004), this study adopts the definition of Maggetti, (2007) as a yardstick for assessing the underlining bureaucratic autonomy in this study. Maggetti, (2007) posits that autonomy means, above all, to be able to translate one's own preferences into authoritative actions, without external constraints. Maggetti, & Verhoest (2014) argues that this definition has broad acceptability and applicability. The broad acceptability of their definition is largely because it is in sync with even the most sophisticated usage and understanding of bureaucratic autonomy. i.e. Carpenter's conceptualization of autonomy as political capacity forged over time through networks and reputation (Carpenter, 2001b, 2002 – See Chapter 4).

The empirical assessments of the autonomy of ECOWAS donor funded bureaucrat in this study largely focused on their capacity to 'wield policy influence through the development of autonomous preferences and the ability to translate these preferences into action' (Ege, 2017; Maggetti, 2007).

As specified in the previous chapter (3), the two elements employed in the assessment of the autonomy of the ECOWAS donor funded bureaucrat are ‘autonomy of will’ (capacity to develop independent preferences) and autonomy of action (their ability to translate these preferences into action (Caughey, Cohon, and Chatfield 2009; Ege 2016; Maggetti 2007).

Findings from the interviews conducted suggests that the ECOWAS donor funded bureaucrat wields a degree of autonomy that fits both into autonomy of will and autonomy of action. This position is reflected in the underlisted response by a respondent:

‘Am a technocrat, I have independence opinions on issues and mostly as and when am to bring my opinions to bear on policies I do so. My views are not borne out of the opinions of others. These are my views based on professionally acceptable standards. You know, there are instances you weigh your views against the broader objectives and goals of your mother organization. It is all for the good of the job’ (FAOR – November 2019).

The above is representative of the nature and manner of autonomy exhibited by the ECOWAS donor funded bureaucrat. At least in this study, all the 7 donor funded bureaucrats shared opinions which were indicative of the fact that the autonomy of the ECOWAS donor funded bureaucrat is not absolute. This is largely to say that, even though they brought their independent views to bear, in some instances these views are subjected to the respective objectives and aims of their parent institutions.

The inferences drawn from the responses is that even though the donor funded bureaucrats churn out opinions emanating from their professional judgement, there are instances where these opinions are aligned with the various objectives and goals of the parent organization of the bureaucrat. In narrating some of the instances where the opinions of the donor funded bureaucrat suffer alignment with the corporate objectives of their organizations, an interviewee noted as follows:

‘It depends, there are times where you sit to match your opinions against the broader organizational objectives. Like I stated not all the time though. But you see, there are weightier decisions where you must as a matter of necessity bring your independent professional judgment to bear. You do so when that arises (FAOR – November 2019).

Essentially, there were instances where the professional judgment of the bureaucrat was fully at play. It is for this reason that this study views the autonomy of the ECOWAS bureaucrat as one which is not absolute. In much the same way, the ability of the Ecowas donor bureaucrat to formulate opinions based on their professional judgment is synonymous to autonomy of will as espoused by Bauer & Ege (2016).

Other responses by different respondents alluded to the fact that the kind of autonomy enjoyed by the ECOWAS donor funded bureaucrat is not absolute.

It is hard to say, but from the turnout of events, it is most likely that the views and conduct of these bureaucrats are shaped by their various institutions. You know, these professionals belong to a mother organization. I don't expect that they hold views independent of their mother organizations or nations (POPS – 24th November, 2019).

As highlighted, this goes to buttress the fact that the ECOWAS donor funded bureaucrat does not enjoy absolute autonomy. They may formulate independent views and preferences (autonomy of will) but these views must be in sync with the overall objectives of their parent organization. Another respondent postulated that aligning the views of the donor funded bureaucrat to represent what the organization stands for is not an impediment to the professional competence of the donor funded bureaucrat.

'The opinions of a professional as you know must not run contrary to what his or her organization represents. This must not be misconstrued as a hindrance that goes to affect the professional competence of the technocrat. Your delivery must conform to what your organization represents. Professional opinions, Yes. But it must reflect what your organization represents' (MEUR – 24th November, 2019).

It would therefore seem that aligning the views and preferences of the professional to what the parent organization stands for does not significantly dilute the autonomy of the ECOWAS donor funded bureaucrat. In this sense, this study upholds the view that the autonomy of the ECOWAS donor funded bureaucrat is not absolute but the substance that affects its autonomy is not significant.

Again, the ECOWAS set up encourages donor funded bureaucrats to voice out their views and preferences on specific issues. This to a larger extent seeks to advance 'autonomy of will' – where

the donor funded bureaucrat is encouraged to bring out their own views and preferences (Bauer & Ege, 2016). This was captured in a respondent's response as follows:

These bureaucrats are here for the good of ECOWAS. Even though they provide exceptional professional advice on pertinent issues, we also have mechanisms and processes that inherently enhance the provision of information. See, we send emails to professionals on issues. We also invite them to share opinions on technical issues. At the end of the day, it is all for the good of ECOWAS. They are here to assist us (POR -24th November, 2019).

Regarding the assessment of autonomy of action, as postulated by Bauer & Ege (2016) it encapsulates the ability of the bureaucrat to translate their preferences into action. Bauer & Ege (2016) note that the prerequisite for the exercise of these preferences are 'statutory power and administrative resources' (See chapter 3 for detailed discussion).

Findings from the interviews conducted suggests that the ECOWAS donor funded bureaucrat wields statutory power by virtue of the fact that they have been delegated by a parent organization to act on its behalf (See discussion on autonomy of action in chapter 3). Consequently, they are able to act in the capacity of their parent organizations. Responses by an interviewee during the interview session perfectly captured this assertion.

'As you may be aware, we are not here on our own. We are representatives of our various organizations. So, we are seen in that regard and in a way clothed with a certain responsibility (UNI – 27th November, 2019).

Bauer & Ege (2016) indicates that the bureaucrat's level of involvement in the implementation process is essential for exerting autonomy of action. Reacting to the level of involvement in implementation decisions in ECOWAS, an interviewee noted as follows:

'We bring our professional capabilities to bear and monitor the implementation of some of our decisions. That is the point I am making (WTO – 24th November, 2019).

Based on the above narrative, it is fair to conclude that the ECOWAS donor funded bureaucrat has minimal involvement in ECOWAS implementation decisions.

Another yardstick for assessing the extent of autonomy of action the donor funded bureaucrat wields is ‘administrative resources’. Among other factors, Bauer & Ege (2016) conceptualizes this as independence of financial resources. In this regard, evidence from the study suggest that the ECOWAS donor funded bureaucrat is funded by the parent organization they represent. However, as postulated above, regardless of their funding prowess, they exert minimal involvement in implementation decisions at ECOWAS. This is in sharp contrast with bureaucratic autonomy theories propounded by scholars such as Caughey, Cohon, and Chatfield 2009; Ege 2016; Maggetti 2007.

5.2 The Professionalism of ECOWAS Donor -Funded Bureaucrats

This section presents an analysis of the professionalism of the various donor funded bureaucrats within the circles of ECOWAS. To a larger extent, the study dwells on the professionalism components proposed by Lillvis, (2017): expertise, information-sharing, networks, and self-regulation. These components formed the basis for analyzing the overall professionalism of the various bureaucrats considered for the study.

My results suggest that the various bureaucrats at ECOWAS exhibit some level of professionalism in the discharge of their obligations. In exploring the **expertise** of the ECOWAS bureaucrat, a respondent indicated as follows:

‘Am certain by now you have interacted with most of my colleagues. As well as I know, most bureaucrats here are very well educated and have the requisite knowledge and experience in the work they do. I am an Economist by training, and I have consulted for several reputable organizations. I have at least 14 years post qualification experience. Additionally, I read periodically to update my knowledge on finance and Economic matters’ (UDR – 20th November, 2019)

As pinpointed by a respondent in the above narrative, all the bureaucrats the study interacted with have the requisite academic and professional training in their respective field of practice. The study found that all the 7 bureaucrats who were respondents for the study had at least a master’s degree in their areas of expertise (5 have master’s degrees and 2 are PhD Holders). Additionally, all the respondents have affiliations with specific professional associations. This found space in the response of a respondent as follows:

'I have worked here for some time. All the donor funded bureaucrats belong to a professional body. As a professional, it is generally expected that you join a group of like-minded professionals to ensure that you stay up to date with current happenings. That is the normal practice and most firms nowadays expect employees to join a professional body. As you know it has obvious advantages' (HRP – 20th November, 2019).

This view corroborates Lillvis, (2017) who indicates that through association with a professional union, bureaucrats obtain information by sharing various resources amongst themselves. The second critical component of professionalism assessed in this study is **information sharing**. The study found that the main benefit the donor funded bureaucrats derive from their union with professional associations is information sharing. 5 out of the 7 respondents identified information sharing as the major benefit they derive from their professional associations. An interviewee noted as follows:

'We do a lot of interactions via email, telephone or skype. We have dedicated executives who primarily search for relevant information in our field and make it available to us. In effect, we are assured of contemporary economic details. In our quarterly meetings, members share their practical experiences. These experiences are very essential as you can easily fall on them when you encounter a similar challenge' (WBOR – 20th November, 2019).

The donor funded bureaucrat acquires a higher level of strategy and policy benefit through information shared amongst professional bodies. As Lillvis, (2017) puts it, an association with a professional body reduces the cost of obtaining information. Membership with a professional body enables bureaucrats to acquire shared information and tap into other professional norms. To a larger extent, professionals are able to leverage their membership to acquire information that helps to advance their expertise and explore other innovations in their respective professions. As evidenced in other studies (Gailmard & Patty 2013; Lillvis, 2017) a nonprofessional is often deprived of salient information central to the execution of his responsibilities.

The study also delved into issue of **networking** as a yardstick for assessing the overall professionalism of the donor funded bureaucrat. 2 out of the 7 respondents acknowledged the benefits of networking associated with being a member of a professional entity. Even though the 4 other respondents did not specifically allude to the 'networking benefit', their responses were to

the effect that professional associations tie a group of professionals who work in similar fields together. For instance, one respondent noted as follows:

'You know what, there is a lot derived from groupings involving individuals who have similar work functions and similar work goals. You don't at all struggle to liaise with like-minded –professionals. At the end of the day you build some form of friendship and bond' (FAOR – November, 2019).

Lillvis (2017) contends that because the network sphere of the bureaucrat-professional is almost intact, the cost of rulemaking is lower than a bureaucrat who does not belong to a professional group and hence without professional ties.

The last element employed in this study to assess the professionalism of the ECOWAS donor funded bureaucrat is **self-regulation** as proposed by Lillvis (2017). Self-regulation as operationalized in this study refers to the ability of the professional body to limit entry and to supervise the behavior of its members. Gieryn, (1983) establishes that professional bodies can protect their turf by reprimanding members whose behaviour falls foul of acceptable standards and revoking licences where necessary. This study found this to be lacking amongst the various professional bodies the bureaucrats belong. At least 5 out of the 7 respondents had answered categorically that their associations did not have such legislations. The answer below summarises the views of the respondents.

'No. there is no such provision in our regulations. I am yet to see it. There has not been any instance where a bureaucrat has been sanctioned or the professional licence of the bureaucrat revoked. No, we don't have that' (WHOR – 21st November, 2019).

This is consistent with the findings of Lillvis (2017) where no such sanctions existed. The professional body was rather seen to be much interested in the payment of membership dues. Generally, the ECOWAS donor funded bureaucrat satisfy significant portions of the components (expertise, information-sharing, networks, and self-regulation) outlined in this study as a yardstick for measuring professionalism.

5.3 The Challenges Associated with Exhibiting Professionalism Amongst ECOWAS Donor Funded Bureaucrats

The study additionally delved into challenges that inhibit the ECOWAS donor funded bureaucrat from exhibiting professionalism. As noted above, the overall professionalism of the donor funded bureaucrat is aided by expertise, information-sharing, networks, and self-regulation. For instance, as Lillvis (2017) puts it, where a bureaucrat does not have the requisite expertise to handle policy changes, they may accommodate interferences in their work.

The study found that ECOWAS donor funded bureaucrats contend with scanty challenges that impedes their quest to discharge their obligations professionally. The challenges enumerated by participants can generally be captured under three broad headings: change management, communication flaws and Economic development disparities amongst member countries. It must however be noted that constraints in professionalism generally limits donor bureaucrat's autonomy as high professionalism is linked to high autonomy (see chapter 3).

On the issue of change management, participants were of the view that changes in the ECOWAS hierarchy comes with changes in the way and manner plans are executed. The study found that because ECOWAS is a political body, the chairmanship for instance changes from time to time. When these changes occur, it has significant impact on how specific objectives are approached. A participant noted that these changes to some extent interferes with the smooth execution of their professional mandate.

'Honestly, the occasional changes in the political leadership of ECOWAS has a toe on our functions. There have been instances where you are compelled to align your schedule to the changes which the various leadership implement upon assumption of office' (WHOR – 21st November, 2019).

Inferring from the above submission, these changes only tempers with the work schedules of the various bureaucrats and does not impact on the professional decisions of the donor funded bureaucrat. Similarly, communication flaws and Economic disparities amongst member countries was another challenge to the professionalism of the donor funded bureaucrat raised by participants.

Regarding Communication flaws, the study found that dissemination of information to the donor funded bureaucrats was not forth coming. There were instances messages meant for bureaucrat

took so much time to be disseminated. To a larger extent, this interferes with the discharge of the mandate of the professional bureaucrat. This was well articulated by a participant as follows:

‘Information dissemination here is not the best. As you know one requires data and information to make informed decisions. You cannot plan in isolation. Plans should be borne out of reliable information. One thing I have realised is that in this part of the world getting access to data is a daunting task. The mandated institutions do not have the information themselves. This is very very troubling’ (MEUR – 22nd November, 2019).

The study additionally found that, apart from communication flaws, the other challenges has a minute impact on the professional discharge of the obligations of the individual donor funded bureaucrats. This found space in the submission of a respondent as follows:

‘To be candid, most of the challenges you have referred to are tangential. They do not affect the specific exercise of the professional mandate of the various donor funded bureaucrats here. I concede that to a larger extent it may affect the schedules of the bureaucrat to some extent’ (HRP – 24th November, 2019).

Overall, the various impediments to the professionalism of the ECOWAS bureaucrat identified in this study are Communication flaws, Economic development disparities amongst member countries and Change management. Nonetheless, these impediments on the whole appear sufficiently small not to affect professionalism to a large extent, and thus do not appear to threaten donor bureaucrat autonomy.

5.4 Discussion of Research Questions and Findings

RQ1: What is the degree of autonomy of the ECOWAS donor funded bureaucrat?

This question was intended to ascertain the level of autonomy of the ECOWAS donor funded bureaucrat. As indicated earlier, the study assessed the ability of the bureaucrat to develop policy preferences (autonomy of will) and to translate these preferences into actions (autonomy of action). Essentially, the conceptualisation of autonomy of action and autonomy of will employed in for this assessment mimicked the concept of bureaucratic autonomy as espoused by Bauer & Ege (2016) – See literature review in chapter 3.

The findings from the study suggests that the ECOWAS donor funded bureaucrat wields a significant level of autonomy. Dissecting this claim, the ECOWAS donor funded bureaucrat has the capacity to develop preferences (autonomy of will) even though as specified earlier this opinions and preferences are in some cases aligned to the objectives of the organization they represent. This as noted earlier does not impact significantly on the development of opinions and preferences (autonomy of will) of the bureaucrat as they only serve as guiding principles for their opinions.

Similarly, the ECOWAS donor funded bureaucrat wields autonomy of action owing to the availability two essential prerequisites: ‘administrative resources and statutory power’ as discussed in the analysis section.

It can also be deduced from the evidence presented by the interview conducted that the conditions governing autonomy as seen amongst the ECOWAS donor funded bureaucrat conforms to autonomy standards spelt out in other literature. For instance, Motloba, (2018) set out two important conditions for autonomy: freedom from undue external influences which may enable or interfere with free decision-making process and the competence to comprehend, retain and interpret information, which is finally articulated as a decision reached.

Response to interview question 9. What is your view of the autonomy of bureaucrats (your ability to develop policy preferences and translate your preferences into actions) like yourself in this role? Are there any steps taken by your parent organization or ECOWAS in improving the autonomy of the bureaucrats?

The participants were asked their views about the autonomy of the various donor funded within ECOWAS. This essentially was in relation to the ability of the bureaucrat to develop policy references and translate these preferences into action. In this regard, the responses portrayed that the donor funded bureaucrats in ECOWAS were moderately autonomous. This was amply reflected in the responses of one of the participants as follows:

‘Yes, we are autonomous to some extent. We bring our views to bear and are given room to ensure that our views form part of implemented policies. However, these views are mostly in line with the objectives of our organisations we represent’ (USDR – 25th November, 2019).

Finding: *The ECOWAS Donor Funded Bureaucrat wields both autonomy of will and action.*

RQ2: What is the extent to which ECOWAS bureaucrats are professionals and exhibit professionalism?

This question sought to ascertain the professionalism of ECOWAS donor funded bureaucrats. As noted earlier, this was measured on four important fronts (expertise, information-sharing, networks, and self-regulation) as identified in the work of Lillvis, (2017).

Interview question 1. To start, please tell me a little bit about yourself and how long you have worked for the Donor Organization? What is your professional and educational background?

Interview question 6. Are you a member of any professional Body?

Interview question 7. If Yes,

- a. What benefits do you derive from your association with these professional organizations?
- b. What benefit do you derive in terms of information sharing and networking?
- c. How does your association with these bodies impact on your current role?

The responses of the participants revealed that donor funded bureaucrats have the requisite professional experience and receive periodic information through their association with professional bodies. Again, they have networks through which they discuss various policy issues. The only anomaly however is that, the various professional groups they belong do not have what it takes to impose sanctions on members whose professional conduct leaves much to be desired. This became evident in the response of a participant who stated as follows:

‘No. there is no such provision in our regulations. I am yet to see it. There has not been any instance where a bureaucrat has been sanctioned or the professional licence of the bureaucrat revoked. No, we don’t have that’ (WHOR – 21st November, 2019).

This informed the findings of this study as follows:

Findings: *The ECOWAS donor funded bureaucrat satisfies a significant portion of professionalism standards.*

RQ3 What are the impediments associated with exhibiting professionalism amongst the ECOWAS donor funded bureaucrat?

This question essentially sought to elicit the specific challenges that confronts ECOWAS donor funded bureaucrats in their quest to act professionally.

Interview question 8. What challenges are you facing in the discharge of your professional mandate?

Interview question 11. Are you aware of any other issue that may be interfering with your quest to bring your professional judgment to bear in the discharge of your duties?

Interview question 12. If yes, do you have any suggestions to help turn the situation around?

Responses to these questions brought three key challenges to the fore: Communication flaws, Economic development disparities amongst member countries and Change management. However, the study identified that amongst these challenges, communication flaw was the only challenge that impacted heavily on the professionalism of the ECOWAS donor funded bureaucrat. This was captured in the response of a participant as follows:

‘Yes, there are obviously certain challenges. But I think the rapid flow of communication is the major and cardinal issue which needs to be looked at’ (USDR – 23rd November, 2019).

Findings: The impediments to the professionalism of the ECOWAS donor funded bureaucrat are Communication flaws, Economic development disparities amongst member countries and Change management.

Table 5.0: summary of key findings of the study

Research objectives/ Question	Findings
Autonomy of the ECOWAS donor funded bureaucrat	The ECOWAS donor funded bureaucrat wields both autonomy of will and action
Professionalism of the ECOWAS donor funded bureaucrat	The ECOWAS donor funded bureaucrat satisfies a significant portion of professionalism standard.

Impediments to professionalism amongst the ECOWAS donor funded bureaucrat	Communication flaw is the predominant challenge to the professionalism of the ECOWAS Bureaucrat
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CHAPTER SIX

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

7.1 Introduction

This chapter summarizes the findings of the study and prescribes suitable recommendations. The chapter also draws significant conclusions based on the findings of the study.

7.1 Summary of findings

As noted earlier, the overriding objective of this study was to ascertain the independence of the ECOWAS donor funded bureaucrat. In line with available literature (see chapter 3), the study examined three critical areas that affect the independence of the ECOWAS donor bureaucrat. These areas formed the themes upon which the study carried out its analysis: The autonomy of the bureaucrat, Professionalism of the bureaucrat and the various challenges that confront the ECOWAS Bureaucrat in their quest to exhibit professionalism. Below is the key summary of the findings of the study in relation to the objectives.

The first task was to ascertain the level of autonomy of the ECOWAS donor funded bureaucrat. As evidenced in the study, the ECOWAS bureaucrat wields a moderate level of influence. Fundamentally, the study established that the donor funded bureaucrat expresses independent opinions about issues with consequences for the formulation of policies. However, there are instances where these views are subjected to the objectives and principles of their respective organizations or nations. This study therefore affirms that the autonomy of the ECOWAS donor funded bureaucrat is not absolute. This view was echoed by all the 7 donor funded bureaucrats interrogated by the researcher. Similarly, the study found that the general set up of ECOWAS encourages independent views of all their professionals. Adequate procedures exist for incorporating the views of individual professionals into policy. The general atmosphere of encouraging divers' opinions is in itself a breeding ground for encouraging divergent views and has consequences for the autonomy of the ECOWAS bureaucrats (see Administrative differentiation in chapter 3).

Overall, the study found that the bureaucrats in ECOWAS are fairly professional in the discharge of their obligations. This is reflected in the four critical components of professionalism: expertise, information-sharing, networks, and self-regulation (Lillvis, 2017). Regarding expertise, the study found that all the respondents have the requisite academic and professional training in their respective fields. Similarly, all the respondents were members of a professional body and they are able to share resources amongst themselves. The study also revealed that the professional bodies ensure and enhance networking amongst the bureaucrat professionals. However, the various professional bodies of the bureaucrats do not have the requisite legislation to sanction members as and when their conduct falls foul of acceptable norms.

The study equally examined the various challenges that interfered with the professionalism of the ECOWAS donor funded bureaucrat. The study unraveled three major challenges that confronts the ECOWAS donor funded Bureaucrat: change management, communication flaws and Economic development disparities amongst member countries.

The study found that the periodic change of the political leadership of ECOWAS, by member countries impacts significantly on the ‘corporate’ decisions of ECOWAS which interferes with the professional delivery of the bureaucrat. Again, the irregular delivery of information and the Economic development disparities of member countries equally have an impact on the discharge of the professional obligations of the ECOWAS donor funded bureaucrat.

7.3 Recommendations

The researcher proffers the underlisted recommendations in line with the findings of the study

- ECOWAS should review its current political leadership tenure. The current 12 months tenure for the chairmanship position of ECOWAS is rather too short. As found in the study, these rampant changes in the top hierarchy periodically causes an inevitable modification in the overall managerial focus and direction of ECOWAS. This affects the work environment of the donor funded bureaucrat, and their ability to function optimally. It must be noted that once the overall policy drive of ECOWAS changes, the bureaucrat is often minded align their work schedules and programming to it.
- There is the need to ensure timely and effective delivery of information. Among other things, this study found communication flaws to be the cardinal factor that stands in the way of the professionalism of the ECOWAS donor funded bureaucrat. ECOWAS must as

a matter of urgency put in place the requisite facilities to ensure timely and effective flow of information. In this era of technology, ECOWAS should not have a problem with free flow of information on a timely basis.

- Additionally, the study found that there are instances where bureaucrat professionals struggle with getting the requisite data to inform the formulation of effective policy decisions. This lacuna can be remedied by seeing to the establishment of robust research units within the various ECOWAS secretariats. Additionally, the various member countries should be empowered to correct significant data to enhance the formulation of impactful policies.
- ECOWAS should take a special interest in the development of deplorable economies within its fold. This can be done by cautiously putting in place a development plan that aims at bridging the development gap amongst member countries. In fulfilment of the agenda of bridging development gap, trade barriers within member countries should be removed to encourage the free flow of goods and services. The researcher envisages that these steps will help address the vast development gap among member countries that tend to affect the policy initiatives of donor funded bureaucrats.
- As much as possible, ECOWAS should commence negotiations with the professional bodies of the various donor funded bureaucrats to ensure that they implement legislations permitting the application of sanctions to professionals whose conduct falls short of acceptable standards.

7.4 Limitations of the Study and Future Research Directions

This study employed purposive sampling (non-probability sampling) in selecting the respondents. Consequently, other elements within the sampling frame did not have equal chance of being selected. Future research should, therefore, consider other sampling techniques.

Findings from the study cannot be said to reflect the global autonomy status of other donor funded bureaucrats as this study focused on donor funded bureaucrats within the circus of ECOWAS. It is therefore, recommended that future researchers should consider ascertaining the autonomy status of other donor funded bureaucrats in other unions.

Furthermore, this study employed the Principal Agent Theory (main) and Bureaucratic Professionalism Theory (Supporting) in assessing and establishing the autonomy of the ECOWAS

donor funded bureaucrats. Future research should focus on the application of other models to understand the level of autonomy of the ECOWAS donor funded bureaucrat.

Finally, this study employed qualitative research approach in ascertaining the autonomy of the ECOWAS donor funded bureaucrat. Quantitative research is needed to ascertain other factors that bother on the autonomy of the donor funded bureaucrat.

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APPENDICE

INTERVIEW GUIDE

SECTION A: DONOR FUNDED BUREAUCRAT

1. To start, please tell me a little bit about yourself and how long you have worked for the Donor Organization? What is your professional and educational background?
2. What is your current role in ECOWAS, and how long have you served in this role?
3. Does any contract exist between you/your agency/country and ECOWAS? How does this shape the execution of your mandate?
4. How do you evaluate your contributions to;
 - a. ECOWAS.
 - b. The agency/country you represent or the agency on whose ticket you work.
5. What specific goals and objectives are associated with your project? Who holds you accountable for these goals and objectives?
6. Are you a member of any professional Body?
7. If Yes,
 - a. What benefits do you derive from your association with these professional organizations?
 - b. What benefit do you derive in terms of information sharing and networking?
 - c. How does your association with these bodies impact on your current role?
8. What challenges are you facing in the discharge of your professional mandate?
9. What is your view of the autonomy of bureaucrats (your ability to develop policy preferences and translate your preferences into actions) like yourself in this role? Are there any steps taken by your parent organization or ECOWAS in improving the autonomy of the bureaucrats?
10. What role does the following entities play in shaping the discharge of your duties.
 - a. The country/body on whose mandate you are working with Ecowas.
 - b. The country/body providing funding for the current project you are undertaking
 - c. The various professional organizations of which you are a member
 - d. The current organization you serve (ECOWAS).

11. Are you aware of any other issue that may be interfering with your quest to bring your professional judgement to bear in the discharge of your duties?
12. If yes, do you have any suggestions to help turn the situation around?

Concluding Questions

13. Is there anything you would like to add to our conversation today?
14. Would you be willing to share any documents related to reinforce any of the answers you have provided?

SECTION B: INTERVIEW GUIDE: ECOWAS STAFF

15. Please tell me a little bit about yourself and your role? What is your professional and educational background?
16. What in your view are the challenges that confront the various donor funded bureaucrats at ECOWAS?
17. What do you think about the degree or level of autonomy of donor funded bureaucrats in ECOWAS?